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YOUNG LIVES LOST—A mother being comforted by a relative after she learned that her child had died in the fire that swept through an orphanage in Manila on Thursday, killing 28, mostly children. Page 4.

Taiwan Presses Its Democratic Course

As Election-Fever Peaks, the Mainland Seems Much Farther Away

By John Pomfret
Washington Post Service

TAIPEI — On the night of June 3, 1989, Michael Tseng was glued to his television set as the Chinese Army crushed a student-led movement in and around Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Mr. Tseng remembers experiencing a deep sense of belonging throughout the two-month movement in China.

As Taiwan approaches its ninth major election Saturday as a multiparty democracy, this island of 21 million people is moving rapidly away from mainland China, forging a new and very separate identity from the massive nation 160 kilometers (100 miles) to the west.

President Lee Teng-hui has coined the term "new Taiwan person" to describe the changing face of Taiwan's citizens. For Beijing, this "person" presents an enormous challenge to its mission of unifying with Taiwan.

China's Nationalist government fled to Taiwan in 1949 after it lost a civil war to the Communists. From that point, the Nationalists maintained a dream that they would return to reconquer China. In the 1980s, following the death of the Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek and his son and successor, Chiang Ching-kuo, the Nationalists abandoned that dream.

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Coordinated Rate Cuts Reflect European Unity

Central Banks See Slowdown

Edmund L. Andrews
New York Times Service

FRANKFURT — European monetary union took on a new reality Thursday as central banks across the Continent simultaneously slashed interest rates and brought them to an almost uniformly low level for the first time in history.

The stunning move, just one month before most of the European Union adopts the euro as a single currency, came sooner than most analysts had expected.

It also marked a dramatic shift in policy. As recently as two months ago, European central bankers had adamantly refused to relax monetary policy because they were intent on establishing the credibility of the euro and the fledgling European Central Bank in world markets.

But on Thursday, citing ominous signs that the global economic slowdown had begun to chill Europe as well, the central banks of all 11 countries adopting the euro reduced their base interest rates by at least three-tenths of one percentage point.

When the dust settled, every country in the euro zone except for Italy had reduced its base interest rate to 3.0 percent. The Bundesbank, which has long set the benchmark for rates in Europe, cut its base rate to 3.0 percent from 3.3 percent. Italy, where rates have long been among the highest in the EU, dropped its base rate to 3.5 percent.

"Convergence is now complete," said Holger Fähring, head of economic research at the Frankfurt office of Warburg Dillon Read. "We have arrived."

Though most economists had expected the European Central Bank to lower interest rates early next year, analysts were surprised when the national central banks settled the issue before the new bank officially assumes responsibility for European monetary policy.

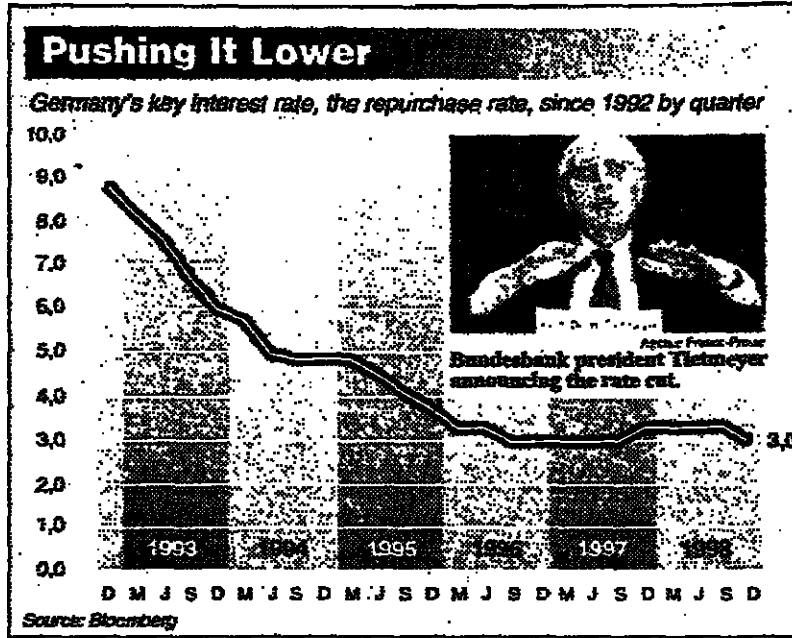
The decision came after months of bitter and public battles between Europe's conservative central bankers and the left-of-center governments that are now in power in most countries. The loudest debate has been in Germany, where Finance Minister Oskar Lafontaine has waged a relentless public campaign to persuade the Bundesbank and the European Central Bank to cut rates.

Hans Tietmeyer, president of the Bundesbank, said Thursday that the central bankers had acted in response to mounting evidence that European growth rates would be significantly slower next year than they had predicted as recently as last summer.

"Our basic estimation is that there will be a measurable slowdown, but there won't be a recession," Mr. Tietmeyer said. But he adamantly denied that the decision was a response to political pressure. "We are deaf to political pressure," he said, "but we are not blind to facts and arguments."

Mr. Lafontaine, getting ready to board a plane for the United States, quickly declared himself pleased.

See RATES, Page 10



New Game Plan for Euro

A Speeded-Up Timetable for the Transition

By John Schmid
International Herald Tribune

PARIS — The abrupt wave of European interest rate cuts Thursday, which came weeks sooner than anyone evidently dared to expect, marks a dramatic departure from a commonly accepted game plan for the transition to the single European currency.

The surprising willingness to tear up the old timetable, which called for a rate easing to accompany the Jan. 1 launching of the euro at the earliest, suggests that economies in that region are cooling faster than previously believed.

"They are trying to avoid the disaster scenario that could happen if they did not cut," said Alison Cottrell, senior economist in London at PaineWebber International.

"This is meant to counter the decline in business confidence and prevent a downward spiral in the eurozone economy," said Joachim Fels, economist at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter in London.

At the very worst, some analysis suggests, several of Europe's biggest economies could teeter on the edge of recession next year, at least under the technical definitions of two consecutive quarterly contractions.

While that appears unlikely to many, others warn that the Continent might face such sluggish growth that nations like Germany will struggle just to keep crisis-level unemployment from rising again. Another increase in German unemployment would be politically explosive in Bonn, where the new government was elected on its promise to bring down the chronic jobless rate.

The economic fundamentals have deteriorated more deeply and faster than we thought," said Adolf Rosenstock, a Frankfurt-based economist at Nomura International PLC.

The greatest menace to European prosperity is the plunging economic confidence. This week, Wim Duisenberg, president of the European Central Bank, warned that eroding confidence ranked as "the most significant risk" to help to the dollar. Page 16.

The Dollar			
New York	Thursday 6:44 P.M.	previous close	
DM	1.6715	1.6706	
Yen	118.57	120.125	
FF	5.8025	5.805	
Pound	1.8655	1.6675	
Dollars per pound			
The Dow			
Thursday close	percent change		
-184.86	8,679.68	-2.04%	
S&P 500			
-21.11	1,150.14	-1.80%	
Nasdaq			
-40.85	1,954.35	-2.05%	

London Looks Set To Go With Flow

Britain now looks set to follow the 11 euro countries in reducing interest rates. Page 15.

Stocks fall as concern about the Brazilian economy counters the effects of the rate cut. Page 16.

The European cuts provide no help to the dollar. Page 16.

See BANK, Page 10

Government Outlays Fail to Help Japan

Economy Continued Its Slide for 4th Quarter Through September

By Sandra Sugawara
Washington Post Service

TOKYO — The Japanese government on Thursday announced that the world's second largest economy continued to shrink for an unprecedented fourth quarter in July through September, despite a boost from government spending.

In addition, the government announced that for the first time its debts will exceed its gross domestic product at the end of this fiscal year. "Basically, there is no recovery in sight," said Yasuhiro Ushikubo, an economist with the Industrial Bank of Japan.

The United States and other nations have urged Japan to revive its economy as fears mount that Japan's economic woes could trigger major problems in the rest of the global economy.

Japan's gross domestic product contracted 0.7 percent in the July-September period, for an annual rate of contraction of 2.6 percent.

Taichi Sakaiya, the head of the Economic Planning Agency, acknowledged that the agency's forecast of 1.8 percent GDP decline, made just two months ago, might be too optimistic. Mr. Sakaiya said the overall economic condition was "severe."

But he added, "These figures were actually a little better than I expected." He said he thought the pace of the decline was slowing. Many private economists disagreed, however, noting that public works spending appeared to be the only support for the economy.

"The economy has not hit bottom," said Osamu Katano, economist for Nikko Research Center.

"Every component of private domestic demand tumbled," said Jeffrey Young, economist with Salomon Smith Barney. He said that Japan's new economic stimulus package will not be big enough to counter the fall in private domestic demand. He expects the economy to continue to decline next year.

Robert Feldman, an economist at

See JAPAN, Page 10

2 Sudan Priests Could Face Crucifixion

By Karl Vick
Washington Post Service

KHARTOUM, Sudan — When Pope John Paul II paid a brief, cautious visit here five years ago, he summoned a powerful metaphor for the persecution that Christians often face under Sudan's aggressively Islamic regime, calling it "a particular reproduction of the mystery of Calvary."

Now the Sudanese government is bringing the metaphor to life by threatening a pair of Roman Catholic priests with crucifixion.

The two priests, the Reverend Hillary Roma and the Reverend Lina Tujano, are charged with setting off almost a dozen bombs around Khartoum on June

30 in an alleged plot to mar official celebrations marking the anniversary of the 1989 coup that brought the National Islamic Front to power.

If convicted, they and 18 co-defendants could be crucified, under the medieval Islamic code that governs Sudan's legal system.

The priests' trial — actually a court-martial, held at army headquarters and closed to foreign journalists and diplomats — has been denounced by international human rights groups as a charade based on videotaped confessions very likely produced under torture.

Critics say that what the trial actually lays bare are the fears harbored by the regime that brought it.

Sudanese officials insist they have a

genuine case, but acknowledge it is one that combines a striking number of the elements viewed as threatening to the government.

The largest Christian denomination in this majority-Muslim nation of 32 million, the Roman Catholic Church has steadily resisted the government's program of forced Islamization. It also has endured the repercussions. Priests report being stopped and interrogated by secret police on an almost monthly basis. Also routine is the bulldozing — 30 times in the last eight years — of sanctuaries and schools under the guard of truckloads of Sudanese soldiers.

The Catholic Church serves mostly

See SUDAN, Page 10

AGENDA

Rules Adopted On Looted Art

WASHINGTON (AP) — Paintings confiscated from Jews by Nazi Germany, including Picassos and Cezannes, could be returned to their owners or their heirs, according to guidelines endorsed Thursday at an international conference.

The conference brought together 44 countries, the Vatican and more than a dozen organizations.

No Ulster Progress

After a day of statements that compromise was imminent, Protestant and Roman Catholic leaders failed to agree on several important issues in the Northern Ireland peace effort. Page 5.

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The Peerless Mr. Hague

Tory Leader Causes a Revolt in House of Lords

By Warren Hoge
New York Times Service

LONDON — William Hague, the struggling young leader of the depleted and dispirited Conservative Party, found himself at odds Thursday with the one group he thought he could count on: the scarlet-robed Tory peers in the House of Lords.

The untested young Tory head provoked the fight by firing his party's

leader in the House of Lords, Viscount Cranborne, scion of England's most powerful political family, and then later endorsing the same legislative proposal over which the errant lord lost his job.

That's when the emine flew. The entire Tory leadership of the Lords handed in their resignations from their front bench posts, and the deputy leader, Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, quit outright, saying he was "disgusted and appalled" at Mr. Hague's action. "I believe completely that unnecessary political damage has been caused," he said.

Lord Onslow of Woking sniffed at Mr. Hague's declaration of the need for better discipline among Conservatives. "It ceased to be a Guardian 40 years ago," he said.

Lord Cranborne took the news of his dismissal the way one would expect from a man of the Cecil family, which can date its participation in England's public life back to Elizabeth I.

"I am extremely sorry that I have behaved outrageously," he said he told Mr. Hague, "but I would do it again. I would rather sack me, and I said that if I was in his place, I would have done the



Lord Cranborne leaving his London home Thursday after his firing.

same." The lord, who pursues hunting on his Cranborne Manor estate in Dorset, said, "I was sacked for running in like an ill-trained spaniel."

Taking the long view, he said he would survive private life and proudly

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Image-Making / Even the Judge Snickered

By Gates Tape Transfixed

Or, How Microsoft's Hero Played in the Courtroom

By Rajiv Chandrasekaran
Washington Post Service

WASHINGTON — Microsoft Corp.'s top lawyer reclined in a faux leather chair, rubbing his cowl with circles. His Justice Department counterpart, sitting 10 feet away in the drab federal courtroom, kicked off his black Nikes and stared at the carpet. The judge could not stop glancing at the clock as the spectators, now a precious few, nodded off.

Over the last two weeks, the Microsoft antitrust trial, the epic confrontation between the U.S. government and the giant software company, seemed to be deflating.

Gone was the procession of computer industry executives who recounted being roughed up by Microsoft and its chairman, Bill Gates. In their place were experts like the meandering economist who led the court on a long journey through "browser flow rates" and "entry barriers in the operating system market."

Then, Wednesday morning, the government went to the videotape again, projecting Mr. Gates' larger-than-life visage on a giant white screen. As the petulant Mr. Gates was interrogated, the spectators perked up; the reporters scribbled once more; the lawyers sat upright; the judge forgot about the clock. Even the bailiff, prone to scanning the crowd and castigating whispering spectators, seemed again transfixed.

As the weeks drag on in the trial that will help chart the future of the high-tech world, the most compelling moments have been these clips of the world's richest man: His unflattering demeanor in the deposition; his tough-talking electronic-mail; his take-no-prisoners memos to his top executives. Since the trial opened six weeks ago, government lawyers have used Mr. Gates as the leitmotif of their case, bringing his image back again and again, casting him as ringleader of the company's alleged efforts to thwart competition in the computer industry.

By repeatedly playing clips of the videotaped deposition, carefully selected by the government to show Mr. Gates' most elaborate circumlocutions, the Justice Department hopes to raise fundamental doubts about Microsoft's credibility. If the company's chairman will not give a straight answer, they reason, why should his defense be believed?

But lately, as expert witnesses have waded into the soporific muck of economic and technical jargon, the government has found another benefit from the Gates Tape: It's the antitrust equivalent of Jolt Cola.

THE Gates Tape is mesmerizing. Unlike the well-rehearsed executive who is known for delivering Top 10 lists and splashy product demonstrations at trade shows, Gates the defendant comes across as combative and forceful, squirming in a large leather chair as he is buffeted with questions.

In one 20-minute segment, David Boies, a government lawyer, asked Mr. Gates: "What non-Microsoft browsers were you concerned about in January of 1996?"

To everyone in the courtroom, it was clear that Mr. Boies was trying to get Mr. Gates to mention Netscape Communications Corp., the onetime darling of Silicon Valley that makes rival software to "browse" the global computer network. But Mr. Gates would not bite.

"I don't know what you mean, 'concerned,'" he retorted.

"What is it about the word 'concerned' that you don't understand?" Mr. Boies asked in an incredulous tone. "I'm not sure what you mean by it." Mr. Gates replied, deadpan, prompting people in the courtroom, U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson included, to start snickering.

In the clips played Wednesday, Mr. Gates put on



A smiling Bill Gates with his wife, Melinda, as they announced a donation in the campaign to vaccinate children. Inset, the Bill Gates of the tape.

a similar performance, quibbling with Mr. Boies for five minutes over the meaning of the phrase "pissing on," which a Microsoft executive used in an e-mail to describe the company's efforts to thwart the Java programming language.

After first saying that he did not know what the author "specifically means," Mr. Gates eventually conceded that "in this case, I think it means what you've suggested it means."

Spectators and journalists, who had packed the courtroom in anticipation of the next installment of the Gates Tape, were in stitches, prompting the bailiff to call for decorum.

Microsoft lawyers maintain that the tape is an irrelevant distraction to the proceedings and that Mr. Gates behaves on it as would any high-profile executive, trying to focus questions in order to provide more precise answers.

"What possible purpose was the government trying to serve?" Mark Murray, a Microsoft spokesman, sniffed about the colorful segments played Wednesday. "This has no relevance to the case."

No matter how it plays with the judge, who will decide this case, the tape has certainly provided a clear advantage in the government's public relations battle with Microsoft. Mr. Gates' comments, no matter how banal, make their way into almost every reporter's article, and the videotape helps juice up television news reports.

As soon as segments of the tape are played in court, a Justice Department spokesman has been rushing a copy to waiting TV crews outside the building. Only hours later, when the proceedings have recessed for the day, will the cameras record Mr. Murray delivering his counter-spin, bemoaning the government's use of "snippets."

Sensing the potential fallout from the deposition, Microsoft has spent the last five weeks grappling for control of the courtroom VCR, objecting to press any button — pause, fast forward, eject — other than play. It is a squabble that has been almost as interesting as anything on the tape.

The Gates Tape reappeared first during Mr. Boies' opening arguments. The first extended screening was scheduled for the second week of the trial. On the appointed morning, a Thursday, the line of gawkers hoping for a seat stretched down the football-field-long hallway outside the Constitution Avenue courtroom.

But Microsoft's lead attorney, John Warden, managed to stall the proceedings.

The following Monday morning — there is no court on Fridays — with everyone expecting an executive from Apple Computer Inc. to take the witness stand, Mr. Boies and Mr. Warden were huddled in the hallway. Although they were prone to fire bars at each other during the proceedings, the two sometimes banter amiably in a corner during recesses.

This time it did not appear to be idle chatter. Mr.

Gates was on the agenda. When the judge entered the courtroom, Mr. Boies was going to play the tape.

But instead, a closed hearing ensued. Microsoft was trying to rein in the videos. Then came a sidebar conference, where loud static noise filled the room to prevent eavesdropping. Then a recess. Then a meeting in the judge's chambers.

Finally, with spectators growing restless, Judge Jackson emerged just before noon, telling the lawyers that "we will see it all." All of the tape, that is, that Mr. Boies wanted to show.

Trying to salvage Mr. Gates' image, Mr. Warden asked that the Microsoft side get to pick its own portions of the deposition to show, ostensibly, segments in which his chairman looks good. The judge agreed.

Finally, the tape rolled. Mr. Gates was as testy as ever.

When asked who attended a Microsoft executive staff meeting, he said: "Probably members of the executive staff."

Mr. Boies smiled. Mr. Warden sat stoically. And, at one point, Judge Jackson shook his head in disbelief.

ALL TOLD, Mr. Boies said he planned to show about eight hours of the 20-hour interview during the trial. Although Microsoft is selecting its own segments, they are crudely interspersed with the government's. To everybody but the lawyers, it is impossible to know which are which. Mr. Gates looks and acts the same in all of them.

Two weeks ago, a frustrated Mr. Warden decided to argue his Gates Tape case again, this time asking to meet the judge in his chambers. Although reticent at first, Judge Jackson has become a more avuncular courtroom presence in recent weeks. He has tried to show off his growing grasp of technology, to cut through legal posturing on both sides, and occasionally to inject a little levity into the proceedings.

In the meeting, Mr. Warden argued that "playing this deposition in bits and pieces" is being done "for the purpose of an audience outside the courtroom and for the purpose of creating news stories day after day after day." He urged Judge Jackson to order the government to play all remaining segments at one time.

Mr. Boies, also present at the meeting, would have none of it. Yes, the segments were longer than he would like to play, but "it often takes three or four or five or 10 or sometimes 15 minutes to get him to finally admit to something that he should have admitted immediately," Mr. Boies suggested that Mr. Warden was simply "carrying his company's PR water."

Judge Jackson agreed. "If anything," the judge told Mr. Warden, "I think your problem is with your witness, not with the way in which his testimony is being presented."

Alarm Aborts Launch Of Shuttle for 24 Hours

The Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida — An alarm went off inside the space shuttle Endeavour's cockpit minutes before Thursday's planned liftoff, forcing NASA to delay its first space station construction flight.

By the time launch controllers figured out what was wrong and concluded they could launch safely, they had run out of time and Endeavour was grounded for another day. They missed the cutoff by only one to two seconds.

The launch director, Ralph Roe, was convinced his team did the right thing. He said they would try again Friday.

"We want to err on the conservative side," Mr. Roe said. "We don't want to launch with something we don't understand."

The master alarm — a pair of rectangular red lights — began flashing and beeping about four and a half minutes before the scheduled pre-dawn launch. Unsure of what caused it, shuttle managers counted down to the 31-second mark while discussing the problem.

Endeavour's pilots reported that the alarm sounded around the time the shuttle hydraulic power units were turned on. Launch controllers quickly determined that one of the three units had experienced a momentary dip in pressure, and so they counted down 12 more seconds before having to give up for the day.

"Please cut off," a launch controller urged his colleagues.

The six astronauts crawled out of the shuttle an hour later. Two threw up their hands.

"We'll try again another time," said the commander, Robert Cabana.

The one-day delay cost NASA about \$600,000, mostly in fuel and overtime pay. "It's an expensive turnaround, but that's part of the price we pay to be conservative and make sure that we don't have unsafe situations," said Donald McMonagle, a shuttle manager.

Mr. McMonagle said engineers would meet throughout the day to make sure they understood the fleeting drop in hydraulic pressure that set off the alarm.

NASA has only five minutes or less each day to launch Endeavour to meet up with the first space station part, launched two weeks ago by the Russians.

Aboard Endeavour is the second station component, an American-made connecting passageway named Unity. Once in orbit, the astronauts will use the shuttle robot arm to capture the Russian piece and attach it to Unity. Then, two astronauts will perform three spacewalks to hook up all the electrical connections and cables between the two cylinders.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and other dignitaries from around the world had gathered in the driveway to see Endeavour and its crew off following a year's delay caused by a cash crunch in Russia. Most were representatives of the 16 countries participating in the space station effort.

Bomb in Algeria Kills at Least 14

Reuters

ALGIERS — At least 14 Algerians were killed and 24 wounded in a bomb explosion Thursday near a market in the town of Khemis Miliana southwest of Algiers, government security forces said.

The toll brought to at least 37 the number of Algerians reported killed in the last four days.

The bloodshed appeared to follow a pattern set in the last four years when Muslim rebels stepped up attacks before and during the annual fasting month of Ramadan. It will be observed this year during the second half of December and first part of January.

Algeria's violence began in 1992, when the authorities scrapped a general election in which radical Islamists led.

More than 65,000 people have died since, according to Western estimates.

Revisiting Embryo Research

Advances Spur U.S. Senate to Review Ban on Funding

By Rick Weiss
Washington Post Service

WASHINGTON — Inspired by promises of exciting medical advances that could come from studies of cells derived from human embryos, the Senate has begun a tentative reassessment of a four-year ban on the use of federal funds for human embryo research.

To make sure lawmakers understood the immediacy of their task, a scientist unveiled unpublished evidence at a congressional hearing showing that he already had used the technology to grow human brain cells, which may be useful for patients with Parkinson's disease.

At issue is whether a provision banning federal support for human embryo experiments should apply to research on "stem cells," a recently isolated type of cell that scientists suspect can be made to grow into replacement tissues for patients with a host of serious diseases.

In more general terms, Congress is being asked by a growing number of scientific and patient advocacy groups to loosen or repeal the ban.

Because of the peculiar nature of stem cells — they have many of the qualities of embryo cells but, unlike embryos, cannot grow into a person — their status with regard to that ban remains clouded, experts told the subcommittee on labor, health and education, led by Senator Arlen Specter, Republican of Pennsylvania.

"There is a wide variety of views on the moral status of these cells," said Harold Varmus, director of the National Institutes of Health. "The cells do deserve special ethical consideration," he said, because they are the offspring of cells that were taken from human embryos or fetuses. At the same time, he said, "These cells cannot be considered organisms, and cannot be considered embryos."

A ban on federal funding for stem cell research will slow progress toward cures, several experts told the subcommittee.

Others warned that to restrict their search to the private sector could lead to a corporate stranglehold on the technology and a lack of public review.

TRAVEL UPDATE

U.S. Park Visitors Remain Steady

WASHINGTON (AP) — An experimental program allowing national parks and other federal recreation areas to raise their fees has significantly boosted revenues without affecting the number of visitors, a government study concludes.

The four agencies in the program said their recreational fee revenues nearly doubled from about \$93 million in fiscal year 1996, to about \$179 million in 1998.

At the same time, the General Accounting Office said the number of visitors to sites with higher fees increased by 5 percent in 1997.

French Rail Strike Continues

PARIS (AP) — French rail traffic was expected to be heavily disrupted for the eighth consecutive day Friday as striking workers voted Thursday to continue their action despite proposals made by management.

The state-owned SNCF railroad said traffic was disrupted Thursday in most regions except Brittany, northern Picardy and Pas-de-Calais and in the northeast Champagne-Ardenne regions. Suburban trains in the Paris region were running normally, as were high-speed trains within France and to London, Brussels, Amsterdam and Cologne.

Strikes Leave Greece Out of Gas

ATHENS (Reuters) — A flurry of strikes and protests hit Greece on Thursday, clogging traffic, crippling transportation and services and almost draining the country of petrol.

Customs officials defied a Wednesday court ruling declaring their walkout illegal, continuing a four-day strike that has left most gasoline stations empty.

Delta Air Lines will stop flights to three international destinations next year, part of its continuing effort to concentrate planes on more profitable routes. Flights to Prague will end Jan. 17, and flights to Calgary and Edmonton, Canada, will end on April 4, the airline announced. (AP)

DEATH NOTICE

The Hedqvist family and friends are sad to announce the passing of

STIG B HEDQVIST

in Geneva Switzerland,

on November 27, 1998, in his 75th year.

WEATHER

Forecast for Saturday through Monday, as provided by AccuWeather.



North America			
City	Today	Tomorrow	Day After
Albuquerque	65-75	65-75	65-75
Anchorage	35-45	35-45	35-45
Atlanta	75-85	75-85	75-85
Boston	45-55	45-55	45-55
Buffalo	35-45	35-45	35-45
Calgary	25-35	25-35	25-35
Chicago	45-55	45-55	45-55
Denver	55-65	55-65	55-65
Detroit	35-45	35-45	35-45
Houston	75-85	75-85	75-85
Los Angeles	65-75	65-75	65-75
London	55-65	55-65	55-65
Madrid	65-75	65-75	65-75
Moscow	45-55	45-55	45-55
New York	45-55	45-55	45-55
Paris	55-65	55-65	55-65
Phoenix	75-85	75-85	75-85
Portland	45-55	45-55	45-55
San Francisco	65-75	65-75	65-75
Seattle	45-55	45-55	45-55
Shanghai	65-75	65-75	65-75
Singapore	75-85	75-85	75-85
Tokyo	65-75	65-75	65-75
Vancouver	45-55	45-55	45-55

Asia

City	Today	Tomorrow	Day After
Algeria	65-75	65-75	65-75
Amman	65-75	65-75	65-75
Bangkok	75-85	75-85	75-85
Beijing	65-75	65-75	65-75
Bombay	75-85	75-85	75-85
Buenos Aires	65-75	65-75	65-75
Calcutta	75-85	75-85	75-85
Chengdu	65-75	65-75	65-75
Chongqing	65-75	65-75	65-75
Dhaka	75-85	75-85	75-85
Hong Kong	75-85	75-85	75-85
Indonesian	75-85	75-85	75-85
Jakarta	75-85	75-85	75-85
Kuala Lumpur	75-85	75-85	75-85
Manila	75-85	75-85	75-85
Medan	75-85	75-85	75-85
Mumbai	75-85	75-85	75-85
New Delhi	75-85	75-85	75-85
Osaka	65-75	65-75	65-75
Perth	75-85	75-85	75-85
Phnom Penh	75-85	75-85	75-85
Port Moresby	75-85	75-85	75-85
Rangoon	75-85	75-85	75-85
Seoul	65-75	65-75	65-75
Shanghai	65-75	65-75	65-75
Singapore	75-85	75-85	75-85
Taipei	65-75	65-75	65-75
Tokyo	65-75	65-75	65-75
Vancouver	45-55	45-55	45-55

Africa

City	Today	Tomorrow	Day After
Algeria	65-75	65-75	65-75
Cairo	65-75	65-75	65-75
Conakry	75-85	75-85	75-85
Dakar	75-85	75-85	75-85
Harare	75-85	75-85	75-85
Johannesburg	75-85	75-85	75-85
Lagos	75-85	75-85	75-85
Libreville	75-85	75-85	75-85
Nairobi	75-85	75-85	75-85
Port Louis	75-85	75-85	75-85
Tripoli	65-75	65-75	65-75

Latin America

City	Today	Tomorrow	Day After
Buenos Aires	65-75	65-75	65-75
Caracas	65-75	65-75	65-75
Medan	75-85	75-85	75-85
Montevideo	65-75	65-75	65-75
Quito	65-75	65-75	65-75
Santiago	65-75	65-75	65-75
Sao Paulo	65-75	65-75	65-75
Valparaiso	65-75	65-75	65-75

Oceania

City	Today	Tomorrow	Day After
Auckland	65-75	65-75	65-75
Sydney	65-75	65-75	65-75

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THE AMERICAS

Pressure Builds on Panel to Vote Soon on Impeachment

By Brian Knowlton
International Herald Tribune

WASHINGTON — The House Judiciary Committee came under increasing pressure Thursday to vote next week on articles of impeachment as an attempt to broaden the inquiry into presidential fund-raising collapsed and the incoming House speaker warned that further delay would push the matter into next year.

The committee chairman, Representative Henry Hyde of Illinois, told Republican members Thursday that a review of Justice Department memos had found insufficient evidence to pursue allegations of campaign-fund-raising abuses by President Bill Clinton. That represented a dramatic step-down from a move just two days earlier to expand the inquiry.

"The evidence from the Department of Justice being examined in relation to possible campaign finance violations will not be a part of the inquiry next week," a Republican

member of the committee, Representative Asa Hutchinson of Arkansas, said through a spokesman.

The committee, he said, "will not pursue it at this juncture."

With the committee under heavy fire from Democrats — who call its handling of the inquiry a sham and a shambles — and disunion spreading to some Republicans, the White House has responded with growing confidence.

It vowed to mount a "vigorous defense" when its lawyers appear before the panel Tuesday. This was a shift, at least of tone, from August, when Mr. Clinton acknowledged having had an "inappropriate relationship" with Monica Lewinsky and suggested that he might not offer any defense.

"The scope of the defense must equal the scope of the inquiry," White House lawyers wrote Wednesday to Mr. Hyde.

"That set the stage for what is certain to be a few furious and unpredictable days of hearings and depositions, peppered with more

partisan debate, before a probable vote to send at least one article of impeachment to the full House of Representatives. There it would face an uncertain fate.

Amid Democratic attempts to paint the impeachment inquiry as a poorly guided partisan witch-hunt, there have been some calls for top-ranking Republicans to exert more influence on the process. The outgoing speaker of the House, Representative Newt Gingrich, has ended all overt involvement in the matter since the Nov. 3 election results brought his resignation.

His designated successor, Representative Bob Livingston of Louisiana, sidestepped the question of a direct role Thursday but made his preference clear.

"I can't say I'd be perfectly happy," he said, if the process had to be dealt with by the new Congress. But he said he had no idea what would happen until the Judiciary Committee reports.

His comment came after a survey of House Republicans by Representative Tom DeLay,

the majority whip, found overwhelming support for concluding the impeachment inquiry with a vote this month.

Mr. Hyde, praised as a capable and fair-minded legislator before the inquiry began, has come under increasing fire. The reversal on the campaign fund-raising question is likely to fuel the criticism of Democrats who say he has let the process spin out of control, moving in unannounced lurches, or trying to cast too wide a net.

On Tuesday, the Judiciary Committee voted to subpoena memorandums from the FBI director, Louis Freeh, and from a former senior Justice Department prosecutor, Charles La Belia, in which they urged Attorney General Janet Reno to seek appointment of an independent counsel to investigate campaign fund-raising irregularities that could involve Mr. Clinton. One Republican member said the memos would prove Mr. Clinton had violated federal election law.

But after two committee representatives were allowed to see the memorandums, they concluded, according to various reports, that they contained no direct evidence of criminal violations by Mr. Clinton.

Meanwhile, Democratic officials on the Judiciary Committee said Republicans were also set to drop an inquiry into whether certain Democrats sought to intimidate Kathleen Willey, a former White House volunteer, to prevent her from testifying that she was groped by Mr. Clinton, a charge he denies.

That would leave the Judiciary Committee where it began its work — with the allegations forwarded by the independent counsel Kenneth Starr that Mr. Clinton lied under oath about his sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky and then abused the powers of his office in an effort to cover the matter up.

The committee, as matters stand, appears likely to vote next week on one or two articles of impeachment dealing only with the alleged perjury, not with alleged obstruction of justice or abuse of power.

Because Republican members dominate the panel, 21 to 16, and have been voting as a bloc, a vote to send an article or articles of impeachment to the full House is expected to pass.

If so, the full House would probably be called back for a lame-duck session to vote on the matter beginning Dec. 14.

There, the outcome is unclear. An estimated 208 to 216 of the 228 Republicans are thought likely to favor impeachment, along with 3 to 5 of the 206 Democrats (one independent usually joins them). With 218 votes needed to impeach, the matter is too close to predict.

If it did pass, it would go to the Senate for a trial next year. Republicans hold a 55-to-45 edge there, but would need 67 votes to convict Mr. Clinton.

The Senate majority leader, Trent Lott of Mississippi, said Thursday that "we're not making any plans or any preparation at this time" to try Mr. Clinton if the House votes for impeachment.

POLITICAL NOTES

Updating White House Grounds

WASHINGTON — The First Family would get a new recreation room, tourists would walk to the White House through a tunnel, and vendors would be booted off two streets under a 20-year, \$300-million plan proposed to improve the White House grounds. Congress and 10 agencies would have to approve the plan before construction could begin.

Billed by National Park Service officials as the first comprehensive overhaul of the White House area since Pierre L'Enfant laid it out in 1791, the plan essentially would expand the grounds, Executive Mansion and visitor center by adding underground facilities.

Most of the 1,100 parking spaces for White House staff on the Ellipse and grounds would be replaced by two garages beneath Pennsylvania Avenue and the Ellipse, according to the plan. In this way, the White House complex would siphon parked cars from the street, a gesture to pedestrians. About 1.2 million people visit the White House every year. (WP)

Female Marines See Scarlet

WASHINGTON — In a tradition that commemorates battlefield sacrifice at the Halls of Montezuma, U.S. Marines proudly display blood-red stripes on the trousers of their dress uniforms.

Now, advancing into a potential fashion minefield, the Corps has recently begun studying whether to extend that hallowed practice to the skirts of female Marines.

In military parlance, dark-blue skirts with a scarlet stripe running down each side are being "wear-tested" by a group of female Marines at Quantico, Virginia, and several other locations.

The "bloodstripes" are much more than a decorative flair. Corps legend holds that the stripes are a tribute to the Marines who died in 1847 assaulting the castle at Chapultepec during the Mexican War. Any Marine with the rank of corporal or above is entitled to wear them. (WP)

Quote/Unquote

William Kristol, editor of the Weekly Standard, on conservatives who are still pressing for impeachment: "Some of us are hanging tough in our obdurate blindness to the political reality. I'm like one of these Japanese soldiers after World War II. It's 1949 and I'm on some island not knowing the war is over." (NYT)

Away From Politics

• Authorities have charged a man with arson at the Pullman Works after a fire there destroyed the last remaining structure of the railroad factory in Chicago's South Side where a key battle in the U.S. labor movement was fought 100 years ago. (AP)

• A man accused of injecting his 11-month-old son with blood tainted with the AIDS virus told the boy's mother that the child was damaged and no longer worth keeping, the child's mother told a court in St. Charles, Missouri. (Reuters)

• Parents are being advised to throw away baby bottle nipples and pacifiers made of vinyl because of concerns over a material in vinyl that causes cancer in rats. (NYT)

A Law on Trial Outside Court

Espy, Acquitted, Attacks the Special Counsel Statute

By Neil A. Lewis
New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — The acquittal by a federal jury of Mike Espy, the former agriculture secretary, of corruption charges, has ended an independent prosecutor's four-year investigation of Mr. Espy's acceptance of sports tickets and other favors from companies he was supposed to regulate.

"It's cost a lot, it's been tough but I knew from day one that I would stand here before you completely exonerated," Mr. Espy said Wednesday outside the courthouse.

The jury took barely 10 hours to reject 30 counts brought by the independent prosecutor, Donald Smaltz. The trial judge had earlier dismissed eight other counts.

Even as he savored his acquittal, Mr. Espy made it clear he was among the critics who point to each such verdict as a judgment of the independent counsel law under which he was prosecuted. Congress is expected to hold hearings early next year on whether to renew the law, which expires in June. There is little expectation that it will be extended.

Both Mr. Espy and Mr. Smaltz, in comments after the verdict, neatly crystallized the debate over the wisdom and effectiveness of the Ethics in Government Act, which provides for independent counsels to investigate allegations of wrongdoing against senior government officials.

Mr. Espy likened Mr. Smaltz, who spent more than \$17 million investigating him over a four-year period, to a "school yard bully." The independent prosecutor, he said, was

"someone with all the money, all the power, very little supervision, no timetable and able to unleash powerful hordes of prosecutors on you and your family."

Mr. Smaltz defended his work, noting that his office had achieved more than a dozen convictions and garnered some \$11 million in fines and criminal penalties, mostly from companies that were charged with giving illegal gratuities to Mr. Espy. He also said that despite the acquittal, there was value in prosecuting Mr. Espy because it would discourage other officials from behaving the same way.

"The actual indictment of a public official may in fact be as great a deterrent as a conviction of that official," he said.

His two most notable victories were having Tyson Foods, the Arkansas-based poultry producer and distributor, agree to pay \$6 million after pleading guilty to making illegal gifts to Mr. Espy. He also got Sun Diamond Growers, a California cooperative for nut and raisin growers, to pay a \$1.5 million fine for illegally condoning gifts to Mr. Espy by its lobbyist.

But a federal appeals court in Washington overturned the conviction of Sun Diamond, and the case is on appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. The case involves the meaning of the unlawful gratuity statute, which makes it a crime to give, offer or promise "anything of value" to a public official "because of any official act performed or to be performed."

Mr. Smaltz contended that the law was violated anytime a gift was motivated by the recipient's official position. But the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit said the gift also had to be motivated by some



Mike Espy savoring his exoneration.

official act, either a reward for a past act or an inducement for a future one.

Mr. Espy was charged with violating the same statute. In presenting 70 witnesses, Mr. Smaltz portrayed Espy as eager to ask companies he regulated for hard-to-get tickets to sporting events. But Ted Wells, one of Mr. Espy's lawyers, said during his closing argument that the prosecution had presented no witnesses who testified that his client had made a decision based on anything he received.

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ASIA/PACIFIC

Manila Orphanage Fire Kills 28

Most Victims of the Rapid Nighttime Blaze Were Children

Compiled by the Staff from Daystar Inc.

MANILA — Neighbors watched helplessly Thursday as a pre-dawn fire tore through an orphanage in Manila, killing at least 28 people, mostly children. Two other children were missing and presumed dead.

Some children had shouted for help through the metal grates covering windows on the second floor, but frantic neighbors could not open or break down a padlocked main gate to the orphanage.

The dozens of children at the Catholic-run Bahay Kalinga orphanage had been looking forward to a Christmas party Friday. Instead, the Christmas decorations were scattered, along with toys and children's clothes, among the burned debris.

"I'm afraid my playmates were burned," said Brian De Mesa, 5, who survived along with his twin brother. "I saw their burned bodies. I don't want to go back."

About 70 people were inside the orphanage in a slum area of Manila's Paco district when the fire broke out about 2 A.M., officials said. Investigators said faulty electrical wiring may have triggered the blaze.

Fire officials said three-fourths of the orphanage was already on fire when they arrived.

"We couldn't even go near because of the intense heat," said Pablo Cordeta, operations chief of the Manila Fire Department. "A few seconds after we arrived, part of the roof collapsed."

Thirteen dead children were found huddled together in one room. In another, a dead adult was found clinging to two children, all charred beyond recognition.

Rescuers lifted the bodies of

small infants wrapped in blankets from the remains of the orphanage, which included a two-story main structure and two cottages, all built between 1913 and 1927.

Staff members said the fire had spread so quickly that they did not have time to rescue many children.

"I was sleeping on the ground floor when I was woken up," said Carina Bellosillo, a teacher. "Already, the ceiling was on fire and the stairs going up to the second floor were burning. I wanted to go upstairs to save the babies, but my companions pulled me back."

For some children, especially the babies left in the nursery, death would have come quickly because of smoke inhalation during sleep. But others awoke and screamed for help from windows. Only some of the older ones managed to clamber out and jump to the ground. Most of the survivors had been sleeping on the ground floor.

"I heard babies crying at one end of the building, but we could not reach them because the flames were spreading rapidly and we could not stand the heat," said Tobias Ronan, an orphanage worker.

A teacher at the orphanage said: "I was able to get eight children out from one of the rooms, but three

others were left behind. I don't know what happened to them."

The orphanage also cared at night for children of working parents, who wept outside while they waited for word of their children.

"He was my only joy," said Anabel Sambrano, 21, whose 9-month-old boy died in the blaze. "I heard about the fire on the radio and rushed here, but it was too late. I want my baby."

But the children who came out alive appeared to be little affected. Some played on sheets of cardboard spread out in the quadrangle of the orphanage, while others slept.

President Joseph Estrada visited the gutted buildings Thursday afternoon and pledged to help the orphanage recover.

"I will raise funds personally," he said. "I will do everything I can to rebuild this place."

Faulty equipment or lax enforcement of fire regulations are responsible for many deadly fires in the Philippines. In May 1998, a fire at the Lung Center of the Philippines in Quezon City, part of metropolitan Manila, killed 25 people and devastated the government-run hospital. Two years earlier, a fire at the Ozono Disco in the same suburb killed 162 people. (AP, Reuters)



SMILE! A student backing up to get all his fellow protesters into a picture as thousands demonstrated Thursday in Jakarta for reforms. Indonesia announced legislative elections for June 7 and an assembly vote for president on Aug. 29.

Clinton Lays Down Conditions to Pakistan

By Thomas W. Lippman
Washington Post Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan went to the White House seeking a substantial upgrade in relations with the United States, but by U.S. accounts he has come away with little.

President Bill Clinton told Mr. Sharif that Washington wanted further commitments that Pakistan would refrain from testing and deploying nuclear weapons, wanted more cooperation on apprehending the suspected terrorist Osama bin Laden, who is in Afghanistan, and wanted progress on breaking the Taliban militia's grip on Afghanistan before extending economic and military ties with Islamabad, senior U.S. officials said.

In addition, Mr. Clinton said he could not satisfy Pakistani appeals for U.S. intervention to help resolve the decades-old conflict between Pakistan and India over Kashmir, the

border region that represents the most volatile flashpoint in South Asia.

"I've enjoyed my opportunities to work with the parties in the Middle East and Northern Ireland," the president said, "but it only works when both parties wish the United States to be involved. Otherwise we can't be effective." India, which insists that Kashmir is an integral part of India, has rejected outside mediation.

The fact that Mr. Sharif was in Washington at all and had what he called a "positive" meeting shows that relations between the United States and Pakistan have stabilized since Pakistan rebuffed U.S. entreaties last spring and followed India in conducting underground nuclear weapons tests.

Mr. Clinton imposed mandatory economic sanctions on both countries, organized international condemnation of the tests and canceled a trip to the region.

Since then, however, Pakistan

and India have promised to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the major nonproliferation goal of the Clinton administration, by September. According to senior officials, they also have refrained from "weaponizing" nuclear warheads by installing them on missiles or bombers.

To reward these steps and encourage more, Mr. Clinton lifted some of the economic sanctions on both countries, and authorized a resumption of military training in the United States for Pakistani officers for the first time in a decade.

"We value our friendship with Pakistan very much," Mr. Clinton told Mr. Sharif when they met Wednesday. "I also want to be supportive in any way that we can to help the economy of Pakistan to grow, to benefit ordinary citizens of your country."

He said Mr. Sharif "deserves a lot of credit" for his willingness to resume direct talks with India,

Pakistan's rival and enemy since the two nations were carved out of British India in 1947.

Despite those encouraging words, senior officials emphasized that the president made no new commitments to Pakistan and that further expansion of economic and military ties depended on developments in Islamabad.

Most military ties to Pakistan are prohibited by U.S. law because of Pakistan's nuclear weapons development program. Assistant Secretary of State Karl (Rick) Inderfurth said, "The president reaffirmed our view that more progress needed to be made on these issues before we would be in a position to remove all of the sanctions that had been put on Pakistan in the wake of the test."

Mr. Inderfurth said Mr. Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright also had told Mr. Sharif that they wanted a clean break in Pakistan's relations with the extremist Taliban in Afghanistan.

BRIEFLY

Hindus Smash Up Movie Theater

NEW DELHI — Hindu nationalists smashed windows and marquee at a movie theater, angry about the showing of a movie including lesbian scenes and themes challenging Indian family traditions.

The half-dozen men and women also trashed a restaurant next door to the Regal Theater in New Delhi's Connaught Circus business district.

No one was injured, and the vandals were blocked from entering the hall where the movie "Fire" was showing to a full house.

Reporters had been warned of the attack by activists from Shiv Sena, a Hindu nationalist political party allied with the governing Bharatiya Janam Party.

The film takes on issues rarely addressed in India, including the plight of women in tradition-minded families who are expected to suppress their desires while serving their husbands and elders.

Homosexuality also is rarely discussed in India. (AP)

Witness Levels Charges at Anwar

KUALA LUMPUR — Using intimidation and surveillance, Malaysia's former deputy prime minister blocked an employee from cooperating with a police probe into the minister's sex-life, a witness told a court Thursday.

Azizan Abu Bakar, a former driver for the wife of Anwar Ibrahim, the jailed minister, said he was frequently called by Mr. Anwar and ordered to hinder police investigations into allegations contained in a book.

The probe into accusations in "Fifty Reasons Why Anwar Ibrahim Cannot Become Prime Minister" became the basis for the 10 charges of corruption and illegal sex for which Mr. Anwar is being tried.

Mr. Anwar denies the charges, saying they were trumped up by those who felt his calls for political reform threatened the 17-year rule of his former boss, Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad. The book, written by a former tabloid editor, Khalid Jaffri, catalogs a string of alleged sexual improprieties by Mr. Anwar while he was in office.

Mr. Mahathir fired Mr. Anwar on Sept. 2, saying he had determined that Mr. Anwar was morally unfit for office. The firing led to dozens of massive anti-government protests in Kuala Lumpur. (AP)

An Internet Crackdown in China

SHANGHAI — A computer entrepreneur charged with subversion for giving away Chinese e-mail addresses to an Internet-based democracy magazine is to go on trial Friday in a courtroom closed to the public and reporters.

Lin Hai, 30, is accused of "inciting the overthrow of state power" by giving 30,000 addresses to "VIP Reference," a pro-democracy journal published by dissidents abroad.

The case highlights China's efforts to police the Internet with the same intensity it has used to try to silence other forms of political dissent. (AP)

Australia Hunts a Letter Bomber

CANBERRA — Australian police said Thursday that they were hunting a disgruntled former tax worker after uncovering the 26th letter bomb in a bizarre terror campaign.

The latest bomb was found in Queensland state.

On Wednesday, police said they had found 25 of the small, identical packages. Two postal workers were slightly hurt when one package exploded in a Canberra sorting room.

Most of the packages were found in the Canberra mail sorting room, addressed to the homes of senior tax collectors. Another two bombs were discovered in Sydney. (Reuters)

North Korea Goes on War Alert

SEOUL — North Korean media on Thursday said the Communist nation's military was ready for war with the United States if a dispute over nuclear inspections comes to blows.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency said its soldiers and civilians were "on full alert for war."

North Korea typically sends out belligerent rhetoric, especially when it enters important talks with Washington.

The United States and North Korea are set to resume talks Friday about inspections of an underground North Korean site suspected of being used to produce nuclear weapons.

Washington demands unconditional inspections of the North's underground project. But North Korea has asked Washington to pay \$300 million to inspect the site. (AP)

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Ulster Nears Compromise and Then Backs Away

By James F. Clarity
New York Times Service

BELFAST — After a day of negotiations and statements that compromise was imminent, Protestant and Roman Catholic leaders apparently failed Thursday to agree on several important issues in the Northern Ireland peace effort.

Agreements that on Thursday morning were said to have been all but clinched began unraveling by Thursday evening. The damage to the effort by the new Northern Ireland Assembly to enact the provisions of the peace agreement approved in the spring was serious but not necessarily fatal. The failure leaves the peace effort stalled, as it has been for months.

The members of the new Northern Ireland Assembly had apparently been close

to agreeing on governmental structures designed to give this British province's minority Catholics more power.

In addition to the matters that were left unsettled Thursday, the chief obstacle in the peace effort remained unsolved: the disarmament of the Irish Republican Army.

There was no immediate word on whether the talks would continue Friday. But officials said this was unlikely and that there would be no progress for the rest of the year.

There had nearly been agreement on some of the new governmental structures envisioned in the peace agreement, approved in the spring to end 29 years of sectarian warfare in Northern Ireland.

"It is progress inch by inch," said David Trimble, the first minister of the new Northern Ireland Assembly, who is

also the Protestant leader of the Ulster Unionist Party.

His Catholic nationalist deputy, Seamus Mallon, said "significant progress" had been made.

But within hours reports began to issue from the Assembly that Mr. Trimble had met with Gerry Adams, the president of Sinn Féin, the political wing of the IRA.

Mr. Trimble was said to have repeated his demand for a start to IRA disarmament before allowing Sinn Féin to take part fully in the Assembly's executive cabinet and in the North-South Ministerial Council, in which Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic are to cooperate. Mr. Adams's reply was not immediately known. But he has pointed out repeatedly that the peace agreement stipulates only that the IRA disarm be-

fore May 2000. Mr. Trimble says it must begin long before then, preferably now.

A provisional cabinet without Sinn Féin would be unacceptable to most Catholics in the North, who feel, along with most Protestants, that the peace effort has been an attempt to bring Sinn Féin into mainstream politics in return for a finish to the IRA's military campaign to end British sovereignty here.

The failure to compromise Thursday gave added importance to the visit of Mr. Trimble and Mr. Mallon to Washington to meet President Bill Clinton this weekend. They are expected to discuss the disarmament problem. Former Senator George Mitchell, who led talks that produced the peace agreement, is also to report to the White House on discussions he had on Monday with Northern Ireland political leaders.



David Trimble, first minister in the new Northern Ireland Assembly, between talks Thursday in Belfast.

Euro MPs Vote To Give Selves Equal Salaries

By Barry James
International Herald Tribune

BRUSSELS — The European Parliament voted in favor of giving its members an independent statute along with a common salary and other conditions on Thursday, ending the practice of paying them the same as members of the national assemblies in their home countries.

The statute must be unanimously approved by heads of state and government at their summit meeting in Vienna at the end of next week.

The decision to give all members a monthly salary of 5,677 euros (\$4,894) will mean that many of the legislators will receive substantial increases. Members from Italy, Germany and Austria, who earn more than the proposed salary, will be allowed to keep their higher pay for a further five-year term if they are re-elected in June. But newly elected members from those countries will be paid the same as everyone else.

The proposal could face difficulties at the summit meeting, because it means that members from several countries will earn more, in some cases considerably more, than legislators at home.

Salaries at present range from the 2,828 Ecus (\$2,437) paid to Spanish members to the 9,635 Ecus earned by Italians.

Willi Rothley, the German member who drafted the bill, said the proposed salary was "not particularly high nor particularly low." It was arrived at by adding the total salary bill of all members and dividing it by the 626 seats.

Members will receive a fixed amount for expenses and staff under the proposal, and will have to produce receipts for travel to and from their constituencies.

The salary disparities have led to a series of embarrassing news reports about members' making up their pay by charging for trips they never made and pocketing money earmarked for staff support.

Along with a common salary, members will have to pay European income tax, like members of the European Commission, the EU's executive, and other community bodies. They will also be entitled to a pension from the age of 60.

The bill was opposed by some members because they said it made members employees of the EU.

"British members of the European Parliament do not work for the European Union," said a British Conservative, Edward McMillan Scott. "Conservative Euro-MPs work for the British people, and should be paid by the British people."

BRIEFLY

8 Ethnic Albanians Die in Border Clash

BELGRADE — In the worst breach of the Kosovo cease-fire, Yugoslav border guards killed eight ethnic Albanians on Thursday. Meanwhile, a U.S. envoy sought to persuade Serbs to accept a peace plan before the province plunges into renewed war.

Several other armed incidents were reported Thursday as the U.S. envoy to Kosovo, Christopher Hill, presented President Milan Milutinovic of Serbia with a revised draft plan for the future of Kosovo. Mr. Hill cited some progress toward a permanent peace, but warned that time was at a premium because of fears that fighting, now at a lull, could resume by spring.

The eight armed ethnic Albanians were killed near the town of Prizren when nine of them fired on Yugoslav soldiers guarding the border with Albania, the pro-government Serbian Media Center said. (AP)

A Nazi-Era Laborer Is Denied Payments

COLOGNE — A German court on Thursday overturned a landmark ruling that a Nazi-era slave laborer was entitled to compensation from the government.

The state court in Cologne rejected the claim of Rywka Merin, a Pole who emigrated to Israel in the 1960s, along with those of 20 other Jewish former slave laborers who had worked in the

Auschwitz concentration camp. Judge Hans-Peter Prier ruled that Germany's compensation law for the victims of Nazism did not include any provision for payments purely for slave labor. Victims could, however, claim for maltreatment they suffered while working as slave laborers.

The court's ruling was a setback to campaigners who want Bonn to pay compensation for slave labor. They had hailed a ruling by a Bonn court in November 1997 that Miss Merin was entitled to compensation. (Reuters)

Turk Won't Give In To Coalition Hurdles

ANKARA — The Turkish prime minister-designate, Bulent Ecevit, acknowledged Thursday that he faced serious problems in pulling together rival parties to save Turkey from crisis. At the same time, however, he declared, "I don't give in so easily."

"I believe a result will come out of this Parliament without turning a government problem into a crisis," Mr. Ecevit told deputies of his Democratic Left Party. On Wednesday, President Suleyman Demirel invited Mr. Ecevit to form a cabinet. But he must overcome intense and deep-seated personal rivalries if he is to succeed.

Mr. Ecevit said he was focusing his efforts on bringing together the two main conservative parties — the Motherland Party led by the outgoing prime minister, Mesut Yilmaz, and the True Path Party of Tansu Ciller, another former prime minister. (Reuters)

Blair and Chirac Sketch Defense Pact

Cooperation Talks Aim at Giving EU a Military Role Within NATO

By Joseph Fichett
International Herald Tribune

PARIS — Guidelines for French-British military cooperation in future international emergencies were being readied Thursday for approval by President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Tony Blair in talks framing a joint defense initiative in time for the mid-December summit meeting of the European Union, its last before launching the single European currency.

The two leaders were meeting in the French port of Saint-Malo, once a lair of 17th-century French privateers preying on British vessels and therefore a nicely symbolic venue for the two governments to reconcile their differences on how Europe should organize its foreign and defense policies. In the two-day session, involving large ministerial delegations, the two sides were going to continue hammering out a European military role that fits — and possibly strengthens — NATO as the backbone of security in Europe, officials said.

Signs of a breakthrough between Lon-

don and Paris on defense cooperation have raised both hopes and anxieties in neighboring countries about the impact of the changes on their own positions.

The core on which France and Britain have agreed, officials said, is that the main security responsibility for Europe should remain with NATO while the European allies would strengthen institutional arrangements for acting together militarily in peacekeeping and other contingencies that did not require U.S. involvement. In practice, this would usually require help from Washington to lead U.S. transport aircraft and share intelligence information.

"France thinks the EU should have a capacity to evaluate, to decide and intervene in crisis situations, naturally with total agreement and cooperation with the Atlantic alliance," the French foreign minister, Hubert Vedrine, said Thursday after a working session the previous day involving his British counterpart, Robin Cook, together with the two countries' defense ministers.

This approach — streamlining European defense cooperation, extending the

political authority of the EU into military affairs and inaugurating a security dialogue between the EU and NATO — became possible when Mr. Blair said last month that Europe needed what diplomats call "a security and defense identity" of its own as the precondition for getting European countries to develop their military capabilities.

Giving a voice to EU states about a military response in crises would not affect France or Britain's determination to retain sole control of their nuclear weapons, Mr. Vedrine said. Nor does Britain intend to see the change weaken NATO's authority or the U.S. leadership in the alliance, officials said.

But even the limited shift could refocus Europe's stumbling efforts to develop modernized military power in the post-Cold War era, and Mr. Vedrine said that France could not afford to ignore the signal of a policy shift in London. "Much work remains to be done," he said.

A big issue at the Saint-Malo talks will be the future shape of a Europe-wide defense industry. Britain's British Aerospace and Germany's Daimler-Chrysler Aerospace, both privately owned, are ready to merge, but France wants that step to be delayed until the emerging French conglomerate around Matra and Aerospatiale can reduce state ownership enough to be accepted into the partnership.

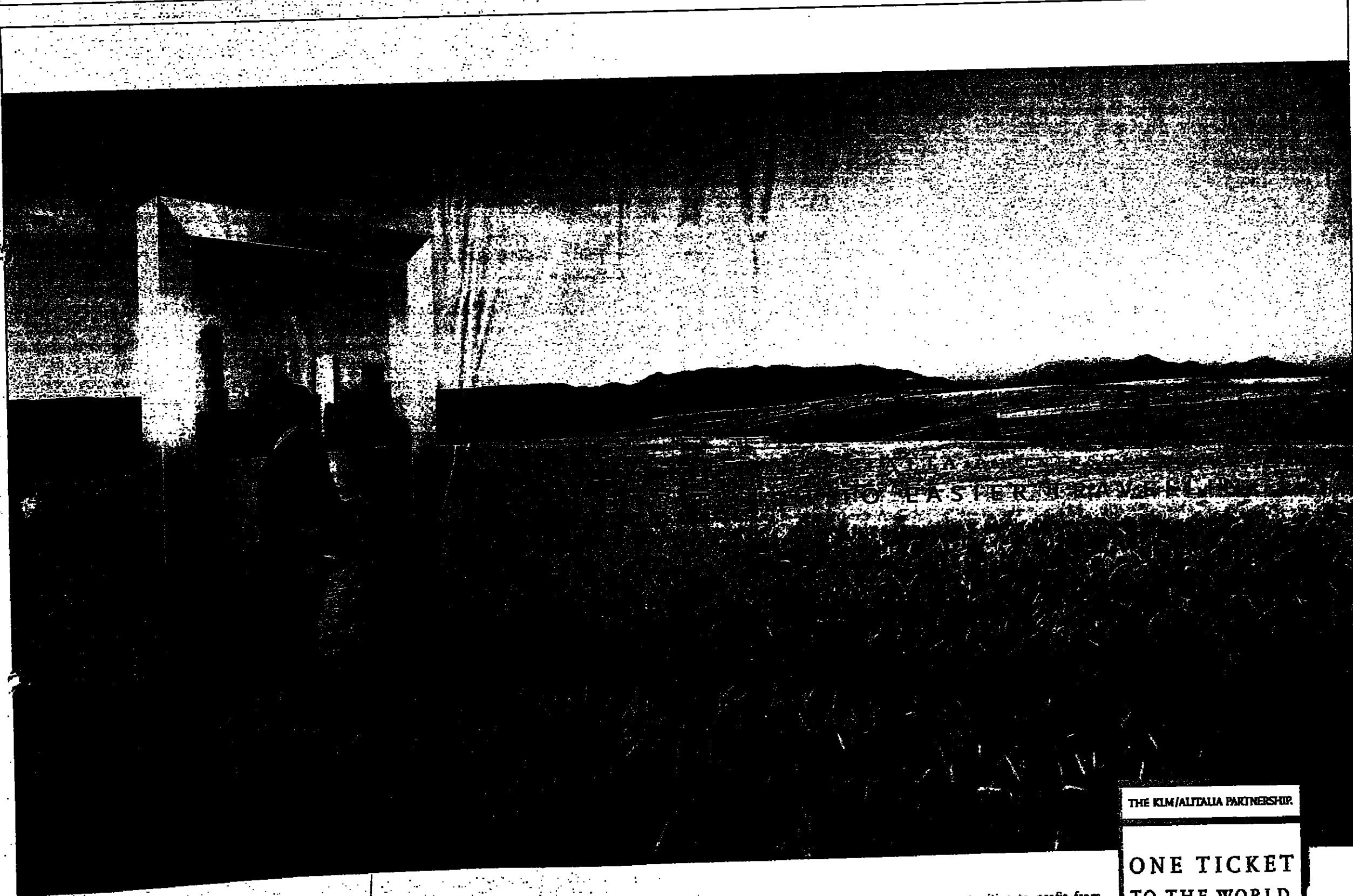
Institutional issues — such as the place of neutrals in the proposed new arrangements — will also have to be negotiated.

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A War of Words and a War of Stones

Clashes Erupt as Netanyahu and Arafat Trade Blame Over Delays



Prime Minister Netanyahu says the peace process is near a breakdown.

JERUSALEM — Israelis and Palestinians clashed on Jerusalem's streets on Thursday while their leaders fought on the battlefield of public opinion.

The Israeli police said six policemen and three civilians were hurt in scattered skirmishes in Arab East Jerusalem. The police arrested 19 demonstrators.

The protests followed the killing of a Palestinian on Wednesday in an attack that Israeli police said may have been the work of a Jewish serial killer.

On the political front, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu lashed out at the Palestinian Authority, saying incitement of "lynch mobs" against Israelis had pushed Middle East peacemaking to a near breakdown.

Mr. Netanyahu accused Palestinian leaders of orchestrating an assault on two Israeli citizens in the West Bank on Wednesday in an effort to force Israel to free Palestinian political prisoners.

Both Israelis were lightly injured. Scenes of the attack were repeatedly broadcast on Israeli television.

"This was organized, orchestrated,

planned in advance and fomented by the Palestinian Authority," Mr. Netanyahu said. "The Palestinians have to stop inciting their people."

The Israeli cabinet has also demanded that the Palestinians pledge not to declare an independent state unilaterally next May and publicly state that Israel had never agreed to free Palestinian prisoners with "blood on their hands."

Otherwise, Israel said, it would not proceed with West Bank troop withdrawals agreed to under the Wye accord signed in October.

The Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, countered that the new Israeli cabinet conditions violated the accord.

"This is an attempt to avoid honest and accurate implementation of what was agreed upon," Mr. Arafat said in the self-ruled Gaza Strip. A Palestinian negotiator, Nabil Shaath, declared the Israeli conditions "null and void."

Both wars — of words and stones — underscored the difficulties facing President Bill Clinton ahead of his Dec. 12-15 visit to Israel and Palestinian-ruled territory. The U.S. State Department has rebuffed the Israeli demands, saying it was "inappropriate to add new conditions to the implementation of this agreement."

But Mr. Netanyahu put the blame on the Palestinians.

"We have a process that is broken down on the Palestinian side," he said before meeting with the U.S. secretary of health and human services, Donna Shalala. "For it to continue on the Israeli side, it has to be repaired on the Palestinian side."

"We are not to be made fools," Mr. Netanyahu said.

The cabinet conditions appeared to have helped Mr. Netanyahu keep rightist coalition partners, who oppose territorial concessions in the West Bank, from leaving the government.

Mr. Netanyahu also offered the hard-line leader of the National Religious Party, Education Minister Yitzhak Levy, a seat in his innermost national security forum. Mr. Levy will join Mr. Netanyahu, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon and Trade and Industry Minister Natan Sharansky in the policy-making group.

Mr. Sharon was scheduled to travel to Washington late Saturday for talks with U.S. officials, while the U.S. Middle East envoy, Dennis Ross, was expected in Israel over the weekend.

Mr. Netanyahu met with former Foreign Minister David Levy, a relative dove, in a bid to woo him back into the cabinet. It was unclear if or when Mr. Levy, who wants to be finance minister, would return.

Before a crucial Parliament vote Monday over whether to call early elections, the decision to freeze the peace process has brought rightists back into Mr. Netanyahu's fold. Members of the National Religious Party said they would now vote with Mr. Netanyahu and block attempts to end his administration prematurely. Supporters of the bill said they might delay the vote because they no longer had a majority.

The Palestinians appealed to the United States for help, and Mr. Arafat said Thursday that Mr. Netanyahu was "violating completely" the Wye agreement.

The U.S. State Department spokesman, James Rubin, rejected the Israeli conditions, saying that the land-for-security agreement "should be implemented as signed."

(Reuters, AP)



Undercover Israeli police officers arresting Palestinians during protests in Arab East Jerusalem on Thursday. Riots continued for a second following the murder Wednesday of an Arab resident by a suspected Jewish militant.

Pollard Clemency Studied

Clinton Asks Top Aides for Guidance About Spy

By James Risen

New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — The White House has asked the government's top law enforcement and intelligence officials and key cabinet members to recommend by early next month whether President Bill Clinton should grant clemency to Jonathan Pollard, the former U.S. Navy analyst who was con-

victed of spying for Israel, administration officials said.

In a sign that Mr. Clinton may decide quickly if he should give in to Israeli pressure to release Mr. Pollard, the White House counsel, Charles Ruff, has sent a letter to George Tenet, the director of central intelligence, Attorney General Janet Reno, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Defense Secretary William Cohen asking for their views on the Pollard case by Jan. 11.

Mr. Tenet has already made clear his fierce opposition to clemency for Mr. Pollard. In the past, the Justice, Defense and State departments have joined the CIA in opposing clemency.

A White House spokesman, David Leavy, cautioned that while Mr. Clinton planned to make a final decision on the case in a "timely manner," he had not set a deadline.

The president is scheduled to travel to Israel and Gaza this month to discuss the Middle East peace effort in separate meetings with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat. He seems likely to be confronted with further questions from the Israelis about the Pollard case during his visit.

The case became a central issue in the peace talks held at the Wye Plantation in Maryland in October. On the last of nine days of strenuous negotiations, Mr. Netanyahu demanded Mr. Pollard's release in exchange for his support for an agreement.

But Mr. Tenet, reflecting the views of the intelligence community, strongly opposed Mr. Pollard's release, and made it clear to the president that he would resign if Mr. Clinton gave in to the Israeli demand, according to several administration officials.

In the end, Mr. Clinton rejected Mr. Netanyahu's demand and agreed only to review the case again.

Mr. Pollard's status has become a recurring issue in American-Israeli relations in recent years, one that is raised at almost every opportunity by Israeli leaders. Mr. Pollard was arrested in 1985 after spying for Israel for at least 18 months. In 1987, he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to life in prison.

He was a prolific spy, handing over thousands of classified documents to Israel, often taking bundles of them out of the office on weekends so they could be copied by Israeli agents and then returned on Monday so they would not be missed.

Intelligence and law enforcement officials argue that he betrayed more secret documents than almost any other spy in recent American history.

Much of the most sensitive intelligence he turned over to the Israelis involved Soviet weapons systems, material that had been gleaned from spies working for the United States in Russia.

While Mr. Pollard argued that he was spying for an ally that deserved intelligence it had been denied unfairly, American officials have never been certain whether any of the information he gave Israel was in turn provided to Moscow, which had its own spies in the Israeli government during the 1980s.

Under pressure from Israel, Mr. Clinton has reviewed the case twice before, once in 1993 and again in 1996.

Adultery Costs A U.S. Admiral Some of Pension

By Frank Bruni

New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — A one-star navy admiral has accepted a finding of guilt on charges that he improperly steered military contracts to his partner in an adulterous affair. He agreed to early retirement at a substantially reduced pension and to penalties including 30 days of house arrest, navy officials said.

The officer, Rear Admiral John Scudi, 54, effectively pleaded no contest Wednesday to the charges at a closed administrative hearing in Norfolk, Virginia, which was a less severe alternative to a criminal investigation and precluded any possibility of a court-martial and prison sentence.

The accusations against Admiral Scudi, who has served in the navy for more than three decades, followed a string of high-profile adultery cases in the armed forces in recent years and heated debates over the military's handling of accusations of adultery.

Commander John Singley, a navy spokesman in Norfolk, stressed the severe financial toll of Admiral Scudi's agreement to request a retirement at the rank of captain as opposed to admiral. If the secretary of the navy approves that request — a formality at this point — Admiral Scudi's annual pension of \$60,240 would be \$17,700 less than he might otherwise have received.

"This is hardly a slap on the wrist," Commander Singley said. "This represents a significant economic loss."

But Robert Maginnis, a retired army colonel who works as a senior policy adviser for the Family Research Council, a conservative group, said that the private administrative hearing was a convenient, easy way for the navy to deflect further attention and humiliation.

"It's a black eye removed, and this guy gets off fairly lightly," Colonel Maginnis said. "I think it's very light. The navy is setting another bad precedent by demonstrating that the higher up you are, the less accountable you are."

Colonel Maginnis said he was speaking in particular about accusations that Admiral Scudi, who worked at the navy's headquarters in the Pentagon as the director of its office of privatization and base management, steered \$150,000 in contracts over several years to a woman with whom he was having an adulterous affair. Admiral Scudi is married.

Annan to Meet Gadhafi on Lockerbie

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

TUNIS — The United Nations secretary-general, Kofi Annan, has said that he will meet with the Libyan leader, Colonel Muammar Gadhafi, on Saturday to try to close the deal for the surrender of two suspects to stand trial in the Netherlands for the 1988 Lockerbie bombing.

"Yes, I will go to Libya on Saturday," Mr. Annan said after meeting Foreign Minister Said Ben Mustapha of Tunisia. "We are going to look at solutions to the problem." Asked if he would meet Colonel Gadhafi, Mr. Annan said: "Yes, I believe so."

Mr. Annan's mission to Libya, which comes within days of the 10th anniversary of the explosion of a jetliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270 people, could mark the end in the long

quest by the United States and Britain to bring the alleged perpetrators to justice.

By cooperating with the United Nations, Colonel Gadhafi could also obtain a long-sought goal: the suspension of the UN sanctions that have barred air travel to and from Libya since 1992.

Libya has been under UN sanctions, including a flight ban, since 1992 for its refusal to hand over the two suspects.

Diplomats said that after weeks of talks with Libyan lawyers, the surrender of the two suspects looked more likely.

Libya has agreed to put its two nationals, Abdel Basset Ali Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah, on trial in the Netherlands. But it has refused British and U.S. demands that they serve their sentence in Scotland if convicted.

"It's not a done deal yet, but it's close," a diplomat said.

A Libyan statement on Thursday denied a report that Colonel Gadhafi had changed his mind over the trial.

"Libya has already announced its acceptance of putting its two nationals on trial at a court in the Netherlands," said the statement, carried by the official JANA press agency. "It has expressed its willingness to enter into negotiations with the concerned parties either directly or through the UN secretary-general over arrangements for this trial."

In London, a Foreign Office spokesman told journalists on Wednesday that Britain had promised Tripoli unrestricted consular access to the two men if they were jailed in Scotland.

But Britain insists a U.S.-British plan to try the suspects before a special court of Scottish judges in the Netherlands is non-negotiable.

(Reuters, LAT)

Rights Group Faults U.S. and EU

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The largest U.S.-based human rights organization, Human Rights Watch, said Thursday that the Clinton administration had "large blind spots" about human rights, ignoring abuses in many countries, and was "severely out of step with most of the rest of the world" on major issues.

The group, which monitors conditions everywhere from offices in 10 countries, praised Kofi Annan for showing "a greater commitment to human rights than any other UN secretary-general."

But it had harsh words for several governments in its 1999 annual report and accused both the United States and the European Union of failures and inconsistencies. The report reserves some of its

toughest criticism for the U.S. government for setting a bad example in its reluctance to join major international treaties on land mines and the setting up of a permanent international criminal court. By refusing to sanction the court more to be severely out of step with most of the rest of the world," the report said. Fearing U.S. soldiers might be the target of politically motivated charges, the United States refused to sign without the option of vetoing the prosecution of any American citizen.

While praising the European Union for conditioning aid and trade preferences on respect for human rights, the report said the EU applied its policies inconsistently and was slow in responding to crises because of its practice of requiring a consensus.

TAIWAN: Rapidly Going Its Own Way

Continued from Page 1

Ties between the two sides improved.

Today, more than 200,000 Taiwanese live in China; there's a waiting list eight years long for mainland brides to emigrate to Taiwan. This island's companies have invested more than \$30 billion in 45,000 enterprises in China; and China is Taiwan's biggest export market after the United States.

But years of increased familiarity and close trade ties have actually magnified Taiwan's alienation from China. This island buzzed with talk about unification in the 1980s; it is unheard of today.

Nelson Chang, 46, is the scion of a prominent family of businessmen hailing from Zhejiang Province along China's central coast. He professes a deep attachment to Chinese culture.

"When I first went back to the mainland to visit my grandparents' graves I was very, very excited," said Mr. Chang, who was educated at Princeton and is president of a Taiwanese cement

company that invests in China. "But ask me now if I want to live in my hometown, and the answer is no."

Beijing's military exercises in 1996 and the lobbying of several missiles over Taiwanese territory during Taiwan's first-ever direct presidential elections further alienated Taiwan from China. China's continued insistence that it will invade Taiwan if the island declares independence has not helped, either.

"My father fought those Communists in the 1940s and my husband is a pilot in the air force," said Gao Yen-chien, 45, a mother of two who turned out Thursday night for a Nationalist Party rally. "So I guess we're supposed to want unification. But I'm not ready to unite with them if they think they can bully us. This is my home."

The main catalyst of Taiwan's separation from China has been 12 years of a multiparty system that has created one of Asia's most dynamic democracies, complete with civic organizations supporting everything from breast-feeding to gay and lesbian rights.

Interviews across this island — with businessmen, high school students, artists and politicians — in the runup to the vote reveal a vibrant culture that is no longer as desperate to define itself as it was in the early days of its democracy.

Others added that despite election rhetoric to the contrary, Taiwan has made great strides in the past 10 years in bridging the divide between the 15 percent of its population made up of families that originated on the mainland and fled to this island after the Communist victory and the majority who lived here before.

Ten years ago, the choices were stark for Taiwan's people: You were either Chinese and favored unification with the mainland or a Taiwanese and backed independence. Today, Taiwan's people appear comfortable with being Chinese and Taiwanese. And that duality is bad news for Beijing.

Yang Cheng-yen, 31, is a playwright and part of a circle of young Taiwanese artists that pushed for the creation of a separate Taiwanese culture. Two years ago, she went to New York University to study finance. When she returned to Taiwan last year she no longer backed independence for Taiwan. She has joined the ever-expanding political center.

"In New York, I realized that most of



Ma Ying-jeou, Nationalist Party candidate for mayor of Taipei, visiting a temple in the capital on Thursday.

the world was splitting up into smaller and smaller countries, tinier and tinier ethnic groups," she said. "Besides, Taiwan doesn't need to declare independence. It already has it."

In Saturday's elections, voters will choose legislators, county chiefs and two mayors. The mayor's race in Taipei between the incumbent, Chen Shui-bian, a gritty opposition party leader, and Ma Ying-jeou, a dashing young star of the Nationalist Party, is the most prominent contest.

Pundits have said the vote is significant because Mr. Chen has been an independence activist. He personally wrote the clause in the charter of the Democratic Progressive Party advocating Taiwanese independence.

Some thinkers claim that a victory by Mr. Chen could cause instability in East Asia and force a change in U.S. policy toward Taiwan because it would signify that Taiwan's voters have adopted a devil-may-care attitude toward China's threats to invade if independence is declared. If Mr. Chen wins, they say, he is poised to run for president in 2000.

Mr. Ma, born in Hong Kong to a family that had fled Communist China, is said to represent a wing in the Nationalist Party that favors closer ties to mainland China. A victory by Mr. Ma, who studied law at Harvard and has served as justice minister, means that Taiwan has embraced stability, these theories go.

BRIEFLY

Nigeria Discloses \$2 Billion Fraud

LAGOS — Two former cabinet ministers and a family member of the ex-dictator Sani Abacha defrauded Nigeria of about \$2 billion by buying and reselling debt payments on a Russian-built steel plant, Nigerian officials said.

The fraud allegation is the latest in a string of similar accusations linked to General Abacha, who was estimated to be worth from \$3 billion to \$6 billion when he suddenly died in early June.

Mohammed Haruna, the chief press secretary to the head of state, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, said Tuesday that the Abacha family member and the ministers — none of whom were named — committed the fraud through payments owed to Russia for the unfinished Ajakuta steel plant in northern Nigeria.

(AP)

Zimbabwe Fugitive Meets Mandela

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa and Zimbabwe were on a potential collision course over gay issues Thursday after President Nelson Mandela met former President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, who is a fugitive convicted in his country of sodomy.

Mr. Mugabe, president of Zimbabwe from 1980 to 1987, was convicted last week of sodomy and homosexual assault. He had been free on bail in Botswana for neighboring Zimbabwe shortly before his conviction. After Zimbabwe requested Mr. Mugabe's extradition from Botswana, he crossed into South Africa.

President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe has begun a campaign against homosexuality, saying it was brought to Africa by the West. He has described same-sex partners as "lower than pigs and dogs."

(AP)

Argentine Judge Probes Baby Theft

BUENOS AIRES — An Argentine judge investigating baby theft during the 1976-83 dictatorship has evidence he probes to name as suspects two more former military chiefs and a former junta leader.

The decision by Judge Adolfo Bagnasco late Wednesday follows the arrest of the former chief of the navy, Emilio Massera, and another one-time junta chief, Jorge Videla, in the last six months. Those two are being held in custody while the investigation "goes on."

Judge Bagnasco called the former army commander Cristino Nicolaides, the former navy commander Robert Reynaldo Bignone and the former junta leader to give evidence in the case into an alleged baby theft ring organized by the military during the dictatorship.

The judge is probing alleged theft and illegal adoptions of the babies of suspected leftists during the "Dirty War."

(Reuters)

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WORLDWIDE

ERICSSON

EDITORIALS/OPINION

Herald Tribune

PUBLISHED WITH THE NEW YORK TIMES AND THE WASHINGTON POST

Autumn in Beijing

Long ago there was considerable talk about a new "Beijing Spring." China's Communist Party was becoming more tolerant of dissent, or so the theory went. At the time of President Bill Clinton's visit, dissidents announced the formation of a China Democratic Party. A Beijing think tank of sorts began holding open discussions on political reform. China promised to sign a key United Nations covenant on political freedom, and to permit the UN human rights chief to visit. Mr. Clinton's administration pointed to these signs of liberalization as early fruits of his decision to reduce the emphasis on human rights in his relations with China.

Now the Beijing Spring is growing decidedly chilly. Authorities shut the think tank in late October. This week they detained the leaders of the would-be Democratic Party, which the government had never registered, and accused them of treason, suggesting that they may be in for long prison terms. Among those detained is Xu Wenli, one of those unimaginably courageous freedom fighters who spent 12 years in prison for pro-democracy activities and then, upon his release, immediately resumed his efforts. Since 1995, he has kept a suitcase packed by his front door, anticipating the knock of China's secret police.

China did allow the UN human rights chief, Mary Robinson, to visit and did, as promised, sign the UN covenant. That pact commits China to respect freedom of assembly and freedom of speech. China's activities this week directly violate that commitment, as do the words of Li Peng, a

senior Chinese leader who vowed in an interview released this week to maintain China's one-party rule. Mr. Li also stoutly defended China's massacre of unarmed students and workers following the Tiananmen protests of 1989.

So what has become of the thaw? From the start, signs of liberalization were faint. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people remained in jail for nonviolent activities. Human Rights Watch reported. Convicts included people such as Li Hai, imprisoned since 1995 for trying to compile a list of Tiananmen victims.

Now that even the tentative liberalizing steps are being reversed, there are two theories: Either conservatives such as Mr. Li are gaining in a power struggle, or the thaw was a sham all along, designed for diplomatic advantage in the West.

Either way, the most recent repression raises questions about Clinton administration policy.

Early this year, the administration chose for the first time in years not to object to Chinese human rights practices, at an annual UN forum. The expectation was that China would respond in a positive way. Now it seems that China may have pocketed the quid without giving much of a quo. Vice President Al Gore, who recently met with China's president — and who so forthrightly condemned Malaysia's human rights record — should speak out now about China's. The dialogue that both China and the administration want so badly cannot be sustained. Mr. Gore should say, if China continues to backslide on human rights.

—THE WASHINGTON POST

Open Trade or Not?

A mini trade war is brewing between the United States and the European Union. The first skirmish, if peace does not break out, will not have all that much effect on U.S. workers or consumers, but the dispute could escalate. And even the first skirmish challenges efforts to apply a rule of law to international trade. The still young World Trade Organization, to which the United States and the European Union and most other nations belong, has established rules to govern trade and has hired judges to decide when those rules are being broken. But whether those decisions can be enforced may depend on the outcome of the U.S.-European dispute.

The immediate fight is over bananas. The United States has been complaining for years about European import rules that unfairly favor European multinational companies and selected banana-growing countries while discriminating against U.S. multinational companies and other banana-growing countries, such as Ecuador and Guatemala. In May 1997 the WTO ruled against Europe, finding — as the WTO's even more toothless predecessor had in 1993 and 1994 — that Europe was breaking the rules.

Now the European Union has changed its rules, but in such minor ways, the United States alleges, that the basic unfairness remains.

The Europeans invited the United States to take its complaint back to the WTO. But that would lead to "an endless loop of litigation," U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky complained — not what the WTO's designers had in mind. She threatened

Europe with retaliatory tariffs. The Europeans then began fuming about U.S. "unilateralism" and said they would accept some expedited ruling, but only if American officials dropped their threats.

All very petty, you might say — and, from an American perspective, not a great case on which to make a stand, since the United States is home to a politically influential banana company (Chiquita) but not many bananas. But by next spring U.S. beef producers, who won a similar case against Europe in the WTO, may be facing similar retaliation. And beyond even them, the already fragile consensus in America for open trade certainly will break down if Europe and others can play games with the WTO — if they can pretend compliance, maintain protectionist policies and suffer no consequences.

The banana dispute has illustrated a flaw in the WTO structure. A losing country should not unilaterally be able to decide whether it has come into compliance; a winning country should not unilaterally be able to impose tariffs if it finds the compliance unsatisfactory. This is a flaw that can be fixed easily: the appeals panel that makes the original finding could be charged with evaluating compliance, and it could do so without permitting further delay.

In the meantime, U.S. and European officials, who have been negotiating off and on, should resolve the current dispute. Neither beef nor bananas should be allowed to set back the progress embodied in the WTO.

—THE WASHINGTON POST

Other Comment

Dumbing Down With Polls

Polls are the meat and potatoes of almost all modern American leadership. The speed of polling changes everything, including decision-making at the highest levels of government. And it does not matter whether polls are right or wrong, it only matters that decision-makers use them as if they were unquestionably correct and true.

The Republicans' "Contract with America" was a marketing plan constructed with poll numbers and focus groups. The killer argument for a balanced federal budget, repeated every day by Newt Gingrich, was that 80 percent of Americans favored it. They might not understand it, and half of them may think Elvis Presley is alive, but the recitation of big numbers has a weight of its own.

It does not really matter whether the questions or the answers are true or accurate. They are spoken and printed,

therefore the numbers are created events, until superseded by new numbers. They substitute for thinking.

Asked about the biggest changes in deciding what is news during his tenure at CBS, Dan Rather answered that coverage is now poll-driven. Forget what you think, "find out" what the audience thinks it thinks, then close your windows on the world and hold up mirrors to the crowd out there.

Leaders can always defend their decision-making by saying they were just doing what polls told them to do.

"The people" become polls. But in truth the people have little or no creative or original impact on politics and other consumerism because they are forever answering old questions based on past assumptions. Their leaders are brain-dead in a new world in which machines have changed thinking to the point where there is no more of it.

—Richard Reeves, commenting in a syndicated column.

The Pinochet Case: Think About the Future, Too

By Flora Lewis

PARIS — In emotional terms, there would indeed be satisfaction in seeing Augusto Pinochet brought to answer to a court of law for the murders and torture committed by his regime in Chile. The simple principle that evil must be judged seems strong and clear.

But in this case there are also strong contradictory arguments which cannot be ignored. That is what makes the issue so interesting and controversial.

Essentially, it is a matter of whether to focus on the past, on what did happen, or on the future, on the consequences in terms of both law and politics if an acknowledged precedent is set with the extradition of General Pinochet from Britain and his trial in Spain.

It is noticeable, in this connection, how reluctant are all the governments involved, with the exception perhaps of Chile, to take a stand. That is no accident. The political implications and responsibilities are painful.

So, the British government insists that this is a purely legal matter and, to the extent that there is a political responsibility, it belongs exclusively to Home Secretary Jack Straw, who is in charge of law enforcement and will not be given cabinet advice. Spanish Prime Minister José María Aznar, comment-

ing on a Spanish prosecutor's request for extradition, said he would be delighted if the case would go away and never come to Spain.

Although a French prosecutor has also filed for extradition from Britain, the Paris government quietly complies itself that it had the foresight to refuse a visa to General Pinochet, with the result that it does not have to face the question of what to do with him.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has said that Chile's right to deal with its own past deserves "significant respect."

Extradition may be an issue of law but it often has harsh political undertones. An example, although in a somewhat different case, is Germany's refusal to ask for extradition of the Kurdish rebel Abdullah Ocalan, wanted for crimes committed in Germany, for fear of a violent reaction by the large Kurdish community in Germany.

(Mr. Ocalan is under arrest in Italy, after being helped to flee from Moscow by an Italian Communist official. Turkey considers him a terrorist, not a political leader, and seeks extradition,

but Italian law forbids delivering a prisoner to a country where he would face the death penalty.)

The Pinochet case is an important innovation, without precedent so far, because it is based on the argument that crimes against humanity can be prosecuted anywhere, at any time. Just when the United Nations is about to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this is an important assertion that responsibility for crimes against humanity is also universal.

There is a gradually evolving affirmation of the concept of international law, still fuzzy in many areas and without any established procedures or powers for enforcement. This concept is appealing, if applied judiciously, but the idea that any judge anywhere can get himself up to try anybody he considers an egregious criminal is appalling.

When the new International Criminal Tribunal is set up, under the treaty signed in Rome last summer, presumably it will have superior claim to jurisdiction. But it is exactly its lack of clarity on how prosecutions will be decided that flaws the treaty. That is why the United States did not sign. The treaty needs better wording, and Wash-

ington should sign when it is adequately improved.

But meanwhile, the question is whether to stress the wish to deal with past atrocities or to consider how future crises will be affected.

The proponents of the case to try General Pinochet in Spain argue that it will create a deterrent for other dictators. That is not impossible. Much more likely, though, is that such a precedent will prevent the kind of compromises which enable the end of civil conflict and the transition to democratic regimes where neither side is really defeated. When there has to be a choice, and that does happen, peace must have priority over punishment.

Principles of justice are important, but to claim one's principle as the only one to serve human needs, regardless of circumstances, is to be as dogmatic as the criminals who claim that they are saving their country, or the world.

There are times when the easy answer that makes you feel good is not likely to be wise. The idea of making General Pinochet pay for all its righteousness, is not worth derauling and distorting the growing consensus that crimes against humanity must be prevented.

Flora Lewis

Stop Appeasing Pyongyang and Give It a Wake-Up Call

By Ralph A. Cossa

HONOLULU — The United

States and North Korea are to resume talks in New York this Friday. A key item on the agenda is the North's suspicious underground construction project. Washington says it has "compelling" evidence that the site, located near the currently frozen nuclear research facility at Yongbyon, is an underground nuclear facility.

But Washington admits that it is not sure just what type of facility it is. Pyongyang insists that the site is not nuclear-related and is willing to let the United States conduct a one-time inspection, provided it receives \$300 million in compensation for the insult of a "groundless accusation."

This is classic North Korean behavior. Pyongyang never misses a chance to turn an opportunity for cooperation into a crisis, especially if there is an opportunity it can reap financial benefit from the confrontation. The United States has rightly

refused to pay, although there are now reports that some type of aid through the UN Development Program may be offered as a "persuasive option." That would be a big mistake.

North Korea promised under a 1994 agreed framework to freeze its nuclear activities and take steps to apply a 1991 denuclearization agreement with the South that calls for complete transparency. Pyongyang must show that it continues to act in good faith with this agreement. Paying it for doing what it is already obliged to do would only reinforce bad habits.

Washington has no one to blame but itself for these habits.

The agreed framework began the process, when two light water reactors (at the cost of some \$5 billion) were promised to generate electricity, along with deliveries of 500,000 tons of fuel oil annually, in return for the original freeze. The frame-

work was the best available option at the time. But it created a compensation-for-crisis mentality that U.S. action over American servicemen missing in action in the Korean War and over North Korea's missile export program has since reinforced.

The question now is how to proceed from here. There are two options. One is to remind the North of its obligations under the agreed framework and then arrange for an International Atomic Energy Agency team, rather than American inspectors, to examine the suspect nuclear site. The framework states that the agency "will be allowed to monitor" the North's freeze on nuclear activity, and that Pyongyang will provide "full cooperation" with the agency for that purpose.

The other option is for both sides to acknowledge their accusations and suspicions and meet each other halfway.

The North has long accused the United States of having nuclear weapons based in the South; these charges continue to appear regularly in North Korean broadcasts. The United States, while refusing to confirm or deny the existence of nuclear weapons in South Korea, notes that President George Bush in 1991 ordered all U.S. tactical nuclear weapons removed from overseas bases and returned home. In support of the North-South denuclearization agreement, Washington also agreed in principle to North Korean inspections of U.S. facilities in the South.

Washington, with Seoul's prior agreement, could offer the North the inspection of U.S. and/or South Korean facilities in return for its own inspections in the North, as a mutual confidence-building measure. And Washington needs to re-think its counterproductive economic sanctions policy. South Korean President Kim Dae

Jung called for a lifting of these sanctions during his address to a joint session of the U.S. Congress in June, to no avail. North has used the continued presence of the sanctions both as proof that Washington is not living up to its end of the agreed framework and as an excuse for its own economic failures.

A lifting of sanctions would be likely to bring at best a mere trickle of foreign investment into the North. But if sanctions were lifted, North Korean officials would get a useful wake-up call. They would be compelled to realize that it is their own policies that are preventing their recovery. They might then be more inclined to look toward economic reform, rather than diplomatic blackmail, to ensure their long-term survival.

The writer is executive director of the Pacific Forum CSIS in Honolulu. He contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune.

A Pipeline Fixation Distorts U.S. Policy on Caspian Affairs

By David J. Kramer

WASHINGTON — The re-

gion around the Caspian Sea has assumed a large role in the Clinton administration's strategy toward Russia and the other new states in the area, as well as Iran and Turkey. The key to this strategy is promotion of a pipeline from Baku in Azerbaijan to Ceyhan in Turkey.

This route, in bypassing Russia and Iran, would accomplish three U.S. foreign policy goals: strengthen the independence of the Caspian states by reducing their dependence on Russia for energy exports, exclude Iran from any possible windfalls, and solidify ties with Turkey.

The trouble is that the oil companies involved in the Caspian area do not support construction of the administration's favored pipeline, estimated to cost \$2.5 billion or more, the most expensive option by far.

They prefer a less expensive route from Baku to Supsa, in Georgia on the Black Sea. From there oil would be shipped through the Bosphorus to the Mediterranean.

The consortium of companies involved in the Caspian meets this Friday and is expected to postpone for a third

time a decision on the Baku-Ceyhan route. The depressed price of oil and indications that Caspian energy reserves might not be all they were cracked up to be leave American oil executives unconvinced that the pipeline is justified.

The Clinton administration's preoccupation with promoting the pipeline has left it seemingly oblivious to the tenuous state of affairs in the region.

U.S. policy toward these states is predicated on winning the personal favor of each leader currently in power. When a

change in leadership occurs, peacefully or otherwise, U.S. policy will be adrift.

Since October's presidential election in Azerbaijan, the government of re-elected President Heydar Aliyev has cracked down on the opposition and resorted to violence to put down demonstrations. A reinvigorated and reunited opposition seeks to remove the Aliyev regime.

In Georgia, President Eduard Shevardnadze, whose country will have a key role in the pipeline issue however it plays out, recently put down an insurrection, the fourth major challenge to his leadership this

year. Suspicions about Russian involvement in plots against him abound.

Instability in Georgia works to Russia's advantage by dampening oil companies' interest in running a pipeline through Georgia.

In Kazakhstan, President Nursultan Nazarbayev is busy nursing his country's next presidential election.

Presidents Saparmurat Niyazov of Turkmenistan and Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan don't even go through the charade of holding elections, and yet both leaders have been feted at the White House, as have Mr. Aliyev and Mr. Nazarbayev.

Mr. Aliyev and Mr. Nazarbayev know that their countries' strategic importance and energy assets mean more to the United States than does political reform in their countries.

As an election observer in Azerbaijan, I was struck by the generally warm response I received traveling around the country. A number of people approached me and my colleagues and thanked us for coming to observe their country's election. The United States must not let these people down by whitewashing what is happening in their countries.

The writer, associate director of the Russian and Eurasian Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, contributed this comment to The Washington Post.

China Can't Steal What Is Already China's

By Sunanda K. Datta-Ray

SINGAPORE — Beijing's

individualistic worldview recalls the courtship scene in Shakespeare's "Henry V" when the victorious English monarch assures the defeated French king's daughter that he is no enemy of France. On the contrary, says Henry, he loves France so well that he will not part with a village of it. He will have it all his.

China's defense minister, Chi Haotian, during a recent visit to Singapore, repeated the customary reassuring noises as the People's Liberation Army counts down to the Dec. 15 deadline by when it is supposed to hand over its multibillion-dollar business empire to a newly formed State Economic and Trade Commission and, as he put it, "eat the grain from the emperor's bowl" — that is, live on its wages.

But in the Spratly Islands controversy, assurance that China "has never invaded other countries" and "does not station any troops in any foreign country" depends on how you define what is "other" and "foreign."

Doubts arise because of what President Joseph Estrada of the Philippines calls "China's 'creeping invasion' of the Spratlys, which are also claimed in part or whole by Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam, as well as the Philippines."

The Association of South East Asian Nations and the ASEAN Regional Forum, of which China is a member, urge claimants to avoid provocative unilateral action. Beijing's position is that while the other five must heed this advice, it has no need to, since the Nansha (the Chinese name for the South China Seas archipelago) have always belonged to China.

Singapore's senior minister, Lee Kuan Yew, acknowledged

this reasoning when the Chinese first built some structures — whether for naval or fishing purposes — is a moot point — in the section known as Mischief Reef in early 1995. He compared the action to a big dog lifting its leg to leave its mark on a tree for the benefit of smaller dogs.

The smaller dogs don't like this bland assumption of a privileged proprietary position. There were almost clashes recently when the Chinese navy undertook "renovations" of existing structures, with a fuming Manila threatening to send military patrols "to keep the invaders out." Wiser heads prevailed, but Southeast Asians have not forgotten that in 1974 the Chinese seized the nearby Paracel Islands, which Vietnam also claimed, and argued that they had always been Chinese.

The classic fait accompli was, of course, in the 1950s when the Chinese built the Aksai Chin road, looting off 40,000 square kilometers from the Ladakh area of Kashmir, even while Prime Minister Zhou Enlai begged his Indian counterpart Jawaharlal Nehru with platitudes about "Hind-Chini bhai-bhai" (Indians and Chinese are brothers).

A certain pattern is common to all these situations: talks without budging from an inflexible position, and quiet action on the ground to substantiate that position.

Some argue that the best insurance is to engage China at all levels so that self-interest obliges it to underwrite the status quo. Beijing is willing enough to be engaged, but clearly without prejudice as to what it considers its rights, about which it keeps the rest of the world guessing. Presumably, actions and inten-

tions will become clearer only when the stage is set.

Little is said, therefore, about China's missile bases and surveillance stations in Tibet, its military presence in Burma, its radar facilities in the Coco Islands in the Bay of Bengal, and its satellite monitoring station on the island of Kiribati in the Pacific. The lack of transparency is bound to fuel suspicion that action in the Spratlys is part of a grand strategy to project power far from the mainland, probably in the Indian Ocean.

General Chi's vision of "a revolutionized, modernized and regularized people's army with Chinese characteristics" supports this long-term objective. He made much of American and Japanese defense spending of \$254.9 billion and \$42.2 billion respectively, while one-third of China's expenditure of under \$11 billion is eaten up, he said, by maintenance, salaries and equipment.

But the PLA Inc. as it is called, is said to earn enough money from its host of commercial enterprises to contribute more than \$25 billion annually to supplement the official military budget.

The downside is that such extensive commercial involvement undermines military morale, war preparedness, specialization and discipline, and encourages factional rivalries over business control and profits.

Given the operation's size and complexity, the Dec. 15 deadline is probably unrealistic. Ultimately, however, if President Jiang Zemin and General Chi have their way, a lean and mean high-tech PLA with 500,000 fewer soldiers might again entitle China to see itself as the center at least of the Asian world.

The 18th century Emperor Ch'ien Lung famously rebuffed England's George III, who sought diplomatic and trade ties, by retorting that the Celestial Empire had no need for tribute or such distant territory. Ch'ien Lung's 20th century successors can say with hand on heart that no "military expansion" is involved in the Spratlys because the islands have belonged to China "since ancient times."

The writer, a former editor of The Statesman in India, is an editorial consultant with The Straits Times in Singapore. He contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune.

IN OUR PAGES: 100, 75 AND 50 YEARS AGO

1898: Mont Blanc

PARIS — Mont Blanc would seem to be the last thing in the world to become a subject of litigation, but three French communes are fighting over the ownership of the summit, and have applied to the State to settle their dispute. Since alpine-climbing has become a fashionable amusement, there is money to be made out of the highest mountain in Europe. The three communes in which the base is situated, which are Chamonix, Les Houches and Saint Gervais, have no title deeds to show. The Government will probably get out of the difficulty by maintaining the "status quo."

1923: College Girls
PARIS — [The Herald says in an Editorial:] Those grumblers who profess to think that the higher education both indisposes and unfits women for marriage

must revise their notion if they give fair attention to certain statistics of Vassar College. In the last few years the interval between graduation and marriage has decreased. The fact that the percentage of college girls who marry is somewhat lower than that of women in general is due to their superior capacity for making a creditable choice.

1948: Racial Duel

CLEVELAND, Tenn. — Five persons were wounded on a bus when two passengers, one white and one Negro, began firing at each other. Officials quoted the bus driver as saying the shooting began when the Negro sat beside a white man on the bus. Under Tennessee law, Negroes and whites cannot sit beside each other on public conveyances. The driver said, after the Negro refused to move to another seat, he and the white man next to him drew guns and began shooting.

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OPINION/LETTERS

If Gambling Is the Rage, Splurge and Do It Big

By William Safire

WASHINGTON — Let me put a modest proposal that will enable Americans to double aid to education, insure everybody's health, put a million new cops on the streets and install an impenetrable missile defense, all while cutting taxes across the board. Here's the big idea: a national lottery with the world's first billion-dollar jackpot.

Smacks of a banana republic, unbefitting the only global superpower? You are out of step with the people; you have missed the great something-for-nothing cultural shift.

Gambling is now far more American than apple pie. Annual U.S. sales of apple pie (35 percent of the total pie market) can be estimated at a mere \$150 million; the gaming profession (formerly the gambling racket) turns over bets of at least \$50 billion a year. Politicians oppose gambling's political juggernaut at their peril. The Republican governors of South Carolina and Alabama, old-fashionedly trying to resist the tide of lotteries and video poker games in their states, were overwhelmed by candidates advised by the Cajun Clintonian, James Carville, to advocate letting the good dice roll.

And not just in the swingin' South did the bingo brigades triumph in the '98 elections. Missouri showed the way in an initiative legalizing "boat in the boat" casinos on riverboats that sit in man-made basins.

Arizonans voted 2-to-1 to continue their troubled lottery. Californians by the same margin gave Indian tribes the right to build glitzy casinos to snatch back high-rolling palefaces from Las Vegas, in the highest-spending statewide campaign in U.S. history.

Only in Maryland did the gambling fever fail to infect the populace. Governor Parris Glendening, a Democrat, standing in the racetrack gate to bar slot machines, turned back a conservative candidate backed by gambling interests.

The people have spoken. Morality, shunrality. Those of us fuddy-duddies who hold that state-sponsored gambling is a perversion of public policy have been routed. Time not just to move on, but to move up to the Age of the Crapshooter.

Who can be expected to support my Billion-Dollar National Lottery (BDNL)? Democratic intellectuals should seize upon it. First, it would put the federal government in direct competition with private casino operators, always a desirable matchup.

Second, a national lottery, with its publicizable billion-dollar jackpot, would undermine the burgeoning state lottery system and concentrate power in Washington, always better equipped to allocate resources fairly.

Republican fat cats should of course be supportive. Everyone in the 38 percent bracket knows that it is in the nature of lotteries to soak the poor, who have been getting away with economic murder since the imposition of progressive taxation.

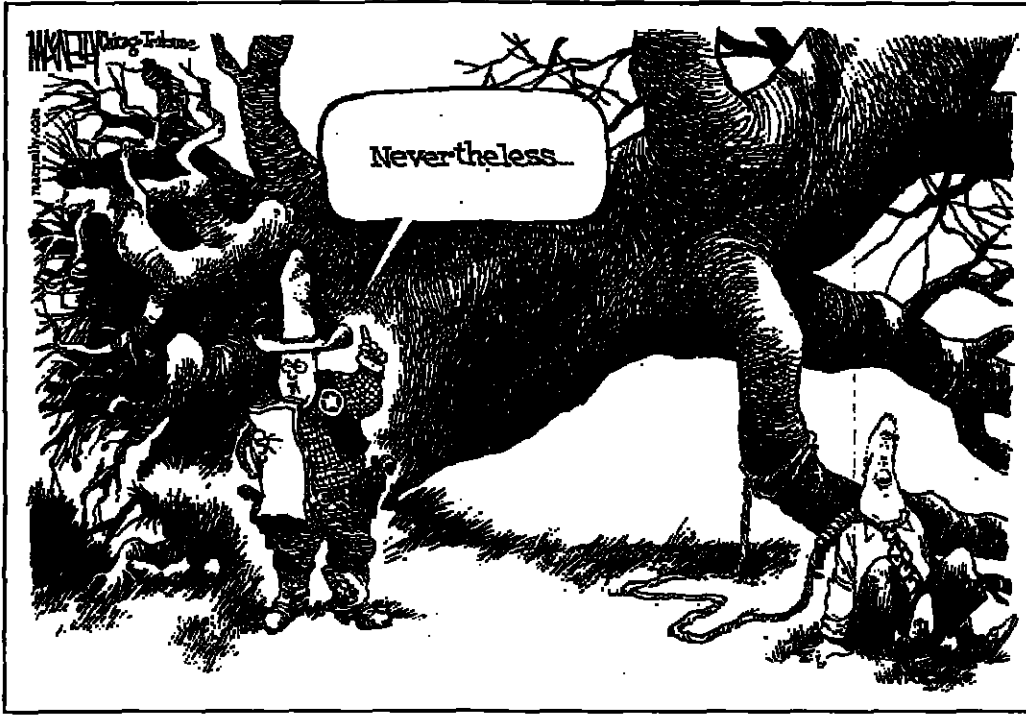
Under the BDNL, the sure losers — those poor suckers happy to contribute a high percentage of their earnings to a lottery — make it possible to reduce the heavy tax burden of life's winners.

Campaign strategists of both parties will set up their dissembly lines. All know that with the siren call of money "earmarked for education," lottery income soon substitutes for general revenues formerly spent on education. Thus, in the hands of persuasive focus groupies, a surreptitious sin tax can masquerade as a virtuous, pain-free nontax.

Opposition is likely to come from newly affluent Indian tribes. Senator Richard (Sits for Tots) Bryant of Nevada induced the General Accounting Office to launch a \$70,000 harassment of the federal commission finding rampant compulsive gambling. Instead, his contributor-constituents should get him to induce tax-free tribal profiteers to reduce the \$1.7 billion budget of Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The most serious challenge to the BDNL will come from the cyberbetters. Government-sponsored gambling will whet the next generation's appetite for ever greater rip-offs of indigent thrill-seekers. The great national bet would ultimately be covered and raised: On the Internet, helping squeeze a few hundred million take-out of Bangladesh, millennial gamblers can foresee the Trillion-Dollar Global Jackpot.

The New York Times



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Chinese Are Right

Jonathan Minsky's "The Chinese, Too, Have Much to Apologize For" (*Opinion*, Dec. 2) suggests that the Chinese government should apologize to its own people for its bad human rights record, instead of merely demanding an apology from Tokyo for war atrocities. This argument, however, cleverly twists and distorts the issue. No Chinese troops, whether Communist or Nationalist, have ever gone to Japan to kill hundreds of thousands of local people in a matter of few weeks.

Japan is perhaps the only issue that unifies an otherwise diverse body of Chinese communities around the world.

China's bitter feelings toward Japan do not come from nowhere. Of the 14 wars that Japan waged between its 1868 Meiji Restoration and the end of World War II, 10 were directed at China.

Today, most Japanese under the age of 45 know about Hiroshima but not the Rape of Nanking, not Manchuria, not Pearl Harbor and not Auschwitz. Instead, Japan's collective amnesia continues, at least until all those victims of the Japanese imperial army pass away.

Around the world, the trend is to pursue and bring to justice those who committed mass killings. But not in Japan.

YULBIN,
Hong Kong

Use the Russian Army

If we believe Jim Hoagland's numbers in "An American Military Priority: Feed the Russian Army" (*Opinion*, Nov. 21), 1.5 million soldiers getting approximately \$4 per month. This is a requirement of approximately \$6 million a month, or \$72 million a year. These military forces could be employed by NATO.

They could remain under the military control of the Russian democracy and be assigned to Russia. They could be used to maintain Russian democracy. In addition, they could be used by NATO, in agreement with the Russian military establishment, for special projects. These could include maintenance of stability in such places as Kosovo or the Middle East.

Overall, there is the potential for great benefit at a relatively small price. It is in the best interest of all democratic governments to keep the Russian military intact and viable.

JOHN P. SORIN,
Chicago

Bland Banknotes

Regarding "A Faceless Currency Representing a Virtual Europe" by Régis Debray (*Opinion*, Nov. 28):

A little more than 50 years ago, when the Deutsche mark came into being, the first banknotes

were printed in secrecy in the United States. These bland banknotes were seen by many as toy money. That unspectacular birth did not prevent the Deutsche mark from becoming one of the most powerful symbols of the new and democratic Germany.

Today the German currency proudly stands for what is memorable in the country's long past. In the not too distant future the European banknotes and coins will stand for the history of a proud continent that has finally grown together after so many centuries of division and strife.

KLAUS B. STADIE,
L'Etang-la-Ville, France

Don't Heed Kissinger

The commentary by Henry Kissinger ("The Point Is Not Inspection but the Topping of Saddam," *Dec. 1*) should alert readers to the delusions and dangers of realpolitik. This odious approach would trash the UN Charter and guarantee more Iraqi deaths and suffering, all to ensure U.S. hegemony in this oil-rich region.

The reprehensible attitude behind this attack mentality reveals a callous disregard for civilized methods of human interaction. Mr. Kissinger's unethical counsel should be spurned by the "so-called world community" that he holds in such low regard.

JOHN OTRANTO,
Munich

Dirty Streets Aren't Just A Job for Government

By Jonathan Yardley

WASHINGTON — A month ago, the economist and social critic John Kenneth Galbraith marked his 90th birthday. Paying his respects in the current New Yorker, John Cassidy makes particular mention of "The Affluent Society," Mr. Galbraith's most important and enduring book, bringing to mind both its formidable strengths and its occasional shortcomings.

"The Affluent Society" was published in 1958. I recall reading it when I was 19. Its basic

MEANWHILE

critique of capitalism has remained part of me ever since, a counterpoint to the conservatism to which, with increased age, I have predictably succumbed.

The strongest of Mr. Galbraith's arguments, in Mr. Cassidy's words, is "that capitalism, left to its own devices, doesn't work properly: it excludes the poor, ruins the environment and fails to deliver enough collectively produced goods, such as roads, reservoirs, schools and hospitals."

Mr. Galbraith wrote, memorably, about the immense value we place on "privately produced production" as against our contempt for public services, which leads to "private opulence and public squalor." At best, he said, "public services are a necessary evil; at worst, they are a malign tendency against which an alert community must exercise eternal vigilance."

He went on: "Such attitudes lead to some interesting contradictions.... We set great store by the increase in private wealth but regret the added outlays for the police force by which it is protected. Vacuum cleaners to ensure clean houses are praise-worthy and essential in our standard of living. Street cleaners to ensure clean streets are an unfortunate expense."

All of which is true, yet it falls short of the truth. Mr. Cassidy says, accurately, that one great error of Mr. Galbraith's is his conviction, as expressed in "The New Industrial State," that economic competition is disappearing and that "an all-powerful corporate bureaucracy" will rule the world.

But the error that runs deepest is Mr. Galbraith's ardent belief in the beneficent and curative effects

of government. As recently as "The Good Society," published two years ago, he contended that the solution to social problems — he identified them with his customary wit, acuity and style — lies in an activist, all-encompassing government that regards no aspect of human existence as too trivial for its attentions.

Yet if we have learned in recent years that the rise of the multinational corporations does not doom us to the decline of competition, so, too, have we learned that there are real limits on what government can do.

Doubtless we Americans have overreacted to the excesses of intrusive government, especially under the stimulus of the sentimental rhetoric of Ronald Reagan. But the suspicion with which the public sector is now viewed is not wholly a blind reaction. There are reasons for it.

One of these came to mind while I was rereading the passage quoted above. The image of immaculate houses serviced by privately owned vacuum cleaners and filthy streets unattended by public cleaners is graphic but incomplete. It assumes an either/or. Either we have private self-indulgence or we have public neglect. It does not consider the possibility that there are limits to what public service can provide and that the only way to go beyond those limits entails private, not public, action.

The streets upon which I look as these words are written — the intersection of Fifth and A streets NE in Washington — come close to fitting Mr. Galbraith's notion of dirt, if not outright squalor.

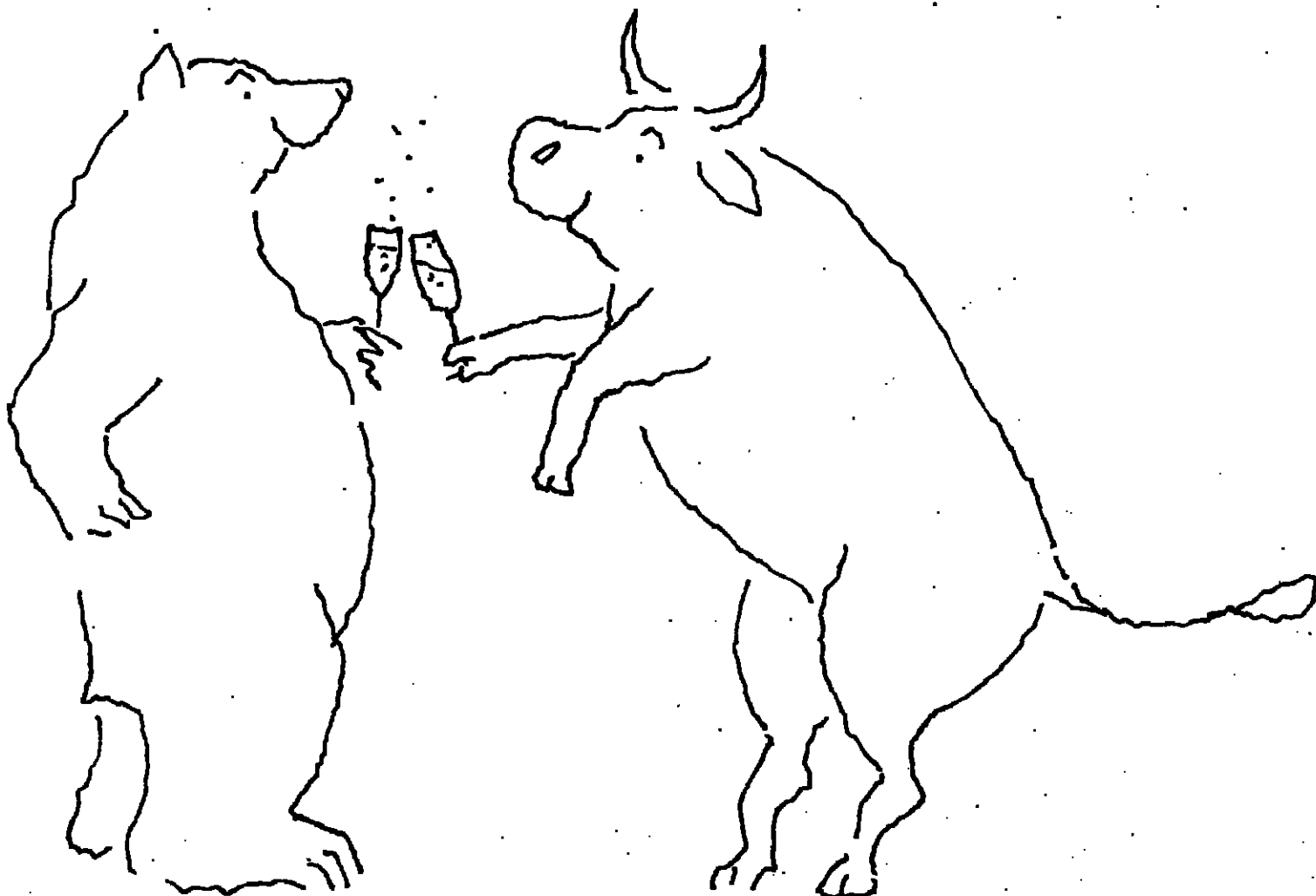
There are bits and pieces of paper lying in the curbs, recycling bins strewn on the sidewalks, glass and plastic bottles in the gutters; in the middle of one block is a huge pile of trash half on the sidewalk, half on the street.

Yet only 48 hours ago the garbage trucks made their way through the neighborhood, and as these words are written the recycling contractor is picking up the loads left for it.

But private citizens treat the streets and sidewalks with indifference, if not contempt. The point should be obvious: Government can't do everything.

The Washington Post

WATCH OUT DAX, HERE WE COME!
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صك: زامن الاصل

INTERNATIONAL

U.S. Arms Sales to Latin America Fail to Take Off as Washington Hoped

By Steven Lee Myers
New York Times Service

CARTAGENA, Colombia — Sixteen months ago, the administration of President Bill Clinton lifted a de facto ban on sales of the most advanced U.S. weapons to countries in Latin America, and many feared the change would unleash a flood of fighter jets and other sophisticated weaponry into a region still haunted by rivalries and political instability.

But nothing happened. The wave of arms sales that many predicted — for better (more exports for American arms makers) or worse (a dangerous arms race) — has not materialized. And with the economic slowdown that hit Asia last year still rippling around the world, there are few signs that any country in South or Central America will soon be able to afford the sophisticated weapons.

Chile, whose interest in buying as many as 24 F-16 fighters in large part prompted the Clinton administration to reverse the prohibitions, has put

off its purchase indefinitely. Chile's defense minister, Jose Florencio Guzman, placed the blame squarely on "the international financial crisis."

"Until that situation is clear, we are not going to be in a position to make a decision," Mr. Guzman said Wednesday in an interview on the closing day of a conference of defense ministers from the Americas in Cartagena.

Only one other country, Ecuador, has even expressed an interest in purchases. The U.S. State Department, which controls foreign sales of military equipment, made it clear last year that Ecuador would not be considered until it resolved its border dispute with Peru. It did so this year, but since then neither Ecuador nor any other country has applied to the State Department, and none is expected to do so soon, officials said.

In three days of meetings, cocktail parties and other functions at the conference, the issue was never seriously discussed, U.S. officials said. Chile's thwarted plans did not even come up at a meeting Wednesday between Mr. Guzman and the U.S. secretary of defense, William Cohen.

"It's not something on my agenda," Mr. Cohen said on the eve of the meetings. Pentagon and Clinton administration officials portray what has happened as a vindication of the decision to lift the ban, which was imposed by President Jimmy Carter in 1978 to deny modern weaponry to the military dictatorships that then held sway in most of the region.

Mr. Clinton reversed the policy at the urging of the Pentagon, which viewed arms sales as a way to shore up U.S. manufacturers and help Latin American countries make their militaries more modern and professional. Officials contended that the reawakening democracies in Latin America had matured enough to be treated like other countries around the world by resolving their territorial disputes and establishing civilian control over their militaries.

There was "all this controversy" about the impact of the policy change, said Peter Romero, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, who attended the conference. "It hasn't panned out."

"That has to do with a couple of things," he said. "One, there's peace in the region, and two, these militaries are looking at this in the long term, as part of their modernization plans."

Others, however, point to hard economic realities, which have depressed sales globally, especially for aircraft manufacturers such as Boeing and Lockheed Martin.

Over the last year, a number of Latin American countries, including Brazil, have had to rethink plans to modernize their forces because of economic difficulties. Chile has seen a debilitating drop in the price of copper, one of its leading sources of revenue.

"The fact that there's no major sale is as much a result of economics as a result of policy," said Richard Grummett, an American analyst who monitors the international arms trade for the Congressional Research Service. "Despite the widow-shopping that a lot of them do, they don't have the resources."

The executive order that President Carter signed in 1978 did not represent an absolute ban

on sales of advanced weaponry but required the State Department to consider prospective sales with "a presumption of denial." Still, the United States granted approval for only one major sale during the time the restrictions were in effect. President Ronald Reagan let Venezuela buy two dozen F-16s in 1981, citing a threat from Cuba.

As a region, Latin America spends less on the military than any other part of the world, and the market for high-tech sales has always been viewed as relatively modest, ranging from \$500 million to \$2 billion a year at most.

Byron Callan, an aerospace analyst for Merrill Lynch in New York, said militaries in Latin America often faced internal threats not easily attacked with supersonic fighters and air-to-air missiles. In the years ahead, he said, these countries are more likely to want equipment such as trucks and transport helicopters, which were never covered by the ban. "The most pressing problems they seem to have are internal rebel movements and drug traffickers," Mr. Callan said. "They may not necessarily need multirole combat aircraft."

RATES: Central Banks Coordinate Cut

Continued from Page 1

"Overall, I'm satisfied," he said. "We saw how the crises in Asia were not without impact. On that basis we welcome this step."

Most economists said the central bankers had strong fundamental reasons for opening the monetary spigots a bit. "I think it's a brave decision," said Kenneth Schoenholtz, global economist at Salomon Smith Barney in London. "There are many who feared that the extensive criticism from political policymakers would prevent the European Central Bank from taking action because they would be worried about being seen as responding to political pressure."

"What this showed is that they realized that they were brave enough to realize that their credibility is not enhanced by making bad decisions."

Even though Germany reported that its economic growth had accelerated in the third quarter, government and in-

dustrial economists have all been slashing their projections for next year.

Inflation, already low in Europe, has declined even further in the last year. In Germany, inflation has dropped to an annual rate of 0.7 percent this year, and many analysts say the country is already on the brink of at least mild deflation.

Economists across Europe have slashed their growth predictions for the entire euro zone, to less than 2.5 percent in 1999 from about 3 percent in 1998. With inflation having all but evaporated, economists said the central bankers had maneuvering room to inject extra money into the economy without endangering price stability.

"If you look over the last 12 months, inflation has dropped substantially and interest rates have not," said Mr. Fahrkrug of Warburg Dillon Read. "The European Central Bank has demonstrated that it is sensitive to global woes and that it is ahead of the curve."

But at least a few economists and analysts suspected that politics played at least an indirect role. Skeptics noted that political leaders and central bankers have been in some ways shadowboxing around a trade-off between hawkish monetary policy and adherence to tough-minded government budget policies.

Mr. Lafontaine's top economic adviser stunned many economists last month by publicly arguing that European countries might have to relax the tough rules of the Maastricht treaty that calls for limits on budget deficits for countries adopting the euro. Others leaders have suggested that governments might have no choice but to increase spending if the central bank refused to lower interest rates.

"I think it was kind of a poker game between the governments and the central bankers," said Emmanuel Ferry, economist at Credit Commercial de France in Paris. "I think there was some very tough bargaining going on between the governments and the central bankers, and that there was a trade-off between monetary policy and fiscal policy."

But Mr. Ferry said he was as surprised as most other people that the bankers moved as early as they did. "The timing is a big surprise, because personally I was anticipating a cut during the first quarter of next year," he said. "Our idea was that the first move



Some of the 10,000 unemployed who marched Thursday in the streets of Marseille to demand a Christmas bonus of 3,000 francs.

would be carried out by the European Central Bank."

The decision to reduce rates appears to have been made on Tuesday, when the central bankers from each country adopted the euro met in Frankfurt for a regular meeting of the governing council of the European Central Bank.

After the council meeting broke up Tuesday evening, Wim Duisenberg, president of the European Central Bank,

suggested that central bankers were concerned about an economic slowdown, though he gave no clear signal that a rate was imminent.

Mr. Tietmeyer could not officially commit the Bundesbank to a rate cut without bringing the issue to a vote by his bank's board of directors. As a result, the decision had to wait until Thursday, when the Bundesbank met for its fortnightly meeting.

BOEING: Faltering in Race With Airbus

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blame for only a small part of the company's troubles.

"Yes, external factors have played a role," said Byron Callan, an aerospace analyst at Merrill Lynch in New York. "But 80 percent to 90 percent of the problems Boeing has today are problems that Boeing created."

Airbus operates in the same global economy as Boeing, yet it appears to be suffering far less. Just how well — or badly — Airbus is doing is difficult to measure because it does not have to disclose its financial condition the way Boeing does.

But David Venz, an Airbus spokesman, said Wednesday that the airplane maker had lost orders for only 15 of its single-aisle models because of the Asian recession and had only a handful of finished jets sitting in storage waiting for buyers to arrange financing for them. Boeing, on the other hand, has 24 planes in storage, down from 36 at the end of June.

The two competitors approach the market in different ways. Airbus, which is hampered by European restrictions on laying off workers, has decided to expand its production steadily. It plans to produce 234 planes this year, 293 in 1999 and 317 in 2000.

Boeing is more manic, increasing production and hiring tens of thousands of workers in boom times, then laying them off when the downturn comes. It says it will produce 550 passenger jets this year and a record 620 next year before slowing to 490 in 2000.

Boeing's current troubles date to its decision in 1996 to win market share at all costs. Worried that it would lose ground to Airbus, Boeing agreed to deliver hundreds of planes at reduced prices in the mistaken belief that it could overhaul its antiquated production methods and deliver a record number of planes at the same time.

After laying off 30,000 workers during a slump in the early 1990s, Boeing hired 32,000 in just 18 months. Though Boeing has the image of a technologically advanced company, each of its planes is essentially custom-made from millions of parts that are tracked by paper.

"They are still building these aircraft in the primitive way they were using 40

years ago," said E. Han Kim, a professor of finance and international business at the University of Michigan Business School.

Many of the new workers did not have the same refined skills as those they replaced. To make matters worse, Boeing's factories were soon overwhelmed by parts shortages. Production fell so far out of kilter that the company was forced to freeze production of its 747 and 737 models for a month in October 1997 to catch up.

The blunder cost the company \$4 billion in accounting charges and angered many of its customers. Airbus has since won orders from longtime Boeing customers such as United Airlines, United Parcel Service and British Airways.

Boeing, in the meantime, is still trying to recover. Harry Stonecipher, Boeing's president, said Wednesday that the company still took 20 percent to 30 percent more hours to produce a plane than it did in 1994.

After dismissing the head of the plane division in September and installing Alan Mulally, who played a key role in the development of the 777, Boeing's chairman, Philip Condit, says that Boeing is committed to increasing its productivity and that he still thinks the company can achieve double-digit profit margins, though he will not say when.

Mr. Mulally is now in the unenviable position of having to motivate a work force to produce at its peak when it knows that the ax is about to fall. "I imagine that you could probably scrape morale off the floor at this point," Mr. Callan said.

And because Boeing must still produce 620 planes next year, most of the layoffs will probably occur in the last half of the year, just when Boeing is scheduled to begin negotiating a new contract with the International Association of Machinists, which represents 40,000 of its hourly workers. The union went on strike against Boeing for 69 days during the last round of negotiations in 1995.

If things do not improve at Boeing soon, the machinists may not be the only ones fearing for their jobs. "I don't know how many chances you get to get your credibility back," said Nicholas Heymann, an aerospace analyst at Prudential Securities.

BANK: A Game-Plan Switch

Continued from Page 1

the European economy. Declining confidence carries the risk of delayed or canceled purchases, investment and hiring as Europeans fear the repercussions from market turmoil, recessions in Asia or weak exports.

All significant measurements of confidence have fallen in recent months. For the 11 euro nations, the index of overall economic confidence fell to 103.7 points in October, from 104.3 in September, according to EuroStat, the EU's statistics agency. Eurowide manufacturing and construction confidence indexes also have tumbled.

In Germany, Europe's biggest economic engine, overall confidence as measured by the respected Ifo economic research institute plunged to 92.4 in October, from 98.4 as recently as July and over 100 a year ago. Ifo's manufacturing index slumped to 95.9 in October, after 107.2 a year earlier.

In Frankfurt on Tuesday, Mr. Duisenberg said that the slowdown in Europe had now become "unequivocal" and that "the risks are on the downside."

Europe's central banks had a practical reason to lower leading rates early. By acting early, they might preempt an uncontrollably strong exchange rate for the euro, a factor that could worsen economic confidence even further. The euro, many believe, could strengthen against the dollar after January in much the same way that the Deutsche mark tends to strengthen in times of economic turmoil.

"Confidence is very sensitive to the dollar," Mr. Cottrell said. Exports become pricier and less competitive as a currency appreciates, and policymakers fear that the strong capital flows into the euro after its January launch will only inflate its value as investors balance their portfolios to include the new money.

If a strong euro pressures the dollar lower, the European Central Bank could act within a few months with another rate cut, economists said. But with the various national central banks having acted now, the European Central Bank will begin operations Jan. 1 free to concentrate on the complex logistics of its inception, without needing to package and present something as climactic as a reduction in lending rates.

"They probably feel they could do without this sort of excitement at the beginning," said Thomas Mayer, a senior economist in Frankfurt for Goldman Sachs & Co. "They are getting things out of the way and starting with less trouble."

Until Thursday, Europe's central bankers had encouraged a different perception of the interest rate timetable. "There has not been much telegraphing; there were no signals," Mr. Mayer said.

Under the conventional view, Europe's new central bank would have announced the starting level for the euro's interest rates at its next meeting, on Dec. 22. That would allow the 11 nations to harmonize their interest rates before moving uniformly to a single European rate. It would also have allowed the European Central Bank to give Europe's economy an early Christmas present.

The cropping of interest rates Thursday — which was unprecedented in the breadth of its coordination by all 11 central banks launching the common currency — came so suddenly that neither the German Bundesbank nor the European Central Bank had any time to drop the usual hints in advance.

In hindsight, it turns out that the economy evidently could not wait another three weeks. The European Central Bank said this week that it had lowered its growth forecast for the euro-zone to 2.5 percent, a slowdown from an estimated 3 percent for this year. It warned, however, that growth could be even lower.

TORIES: Hague Sets Off a Rebellion in the House of Lords

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contrasted his own pragmatic approach in office to "dying gloriously like James IV at Flodden Field," an event that occurred in 1513.

Mr. Hague has had scant success with the party leadership he inherited 18 months ago after the Conservatives' most humiliating national election defeat this century, and this unexpected fracas in his most committed corner has deepened doubts about his ability to reverse the party's falling fortunes. "It has left those of us who have been supporting Mr. Hague very loyal in the



William Hague, the Tories' leader.

Lords not sure which way to turn," said Lord Fraser.

At issue in Thursday's case was an attempt to force a compromise between the governing Labour Party's desire to abolish the right of hereditary peers to sit and vote in the House of Lords and the Conservative leadership's strategic decision to protest that action by obstructing Labour's legislative program as much as possible.

The hereditary peers are the marquesses, earls, viscounts, dukes and barons who pass their titles down from generation to generation. The other members of the House of Lords are life peers, men and women appointed by prime ministers and having no right to pass their positions along to their heirs. They will retain the right to vote under the Labour reform.

The House of Lords has the power to delay but not defeat bills passed by the House of Commons. At Mr. Hague's insistence, the upper body had been exercising that power in the most deliberately obstructionist way possible, repeatedly sending measures back to Commons and threatening to bottle up other legislation central to the government's program.

In an effort to avoid the looming confrontation, Lord Cranborne, with Mr. Hague's blessing, entered negotiations with Prime Minister Tony Blair and came away with a plan that gained the approval of his Conservative colleagues in the

Lords. The deal would allow 10 percent of the 750 hereditary peers to keep their voting rights for several years in exchange for a promise from the lords that they would not throw up any more roadblocks to legislation coming to them.

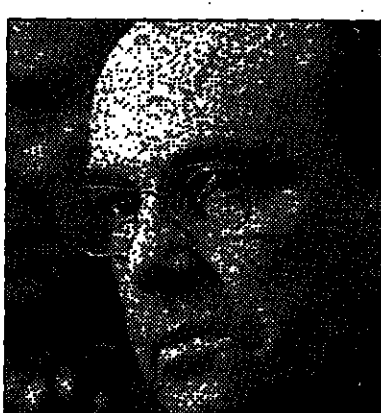
The error that was to cost him his job was his failure to tell Mr. Hague that he had not just discussed a deal, but rather that he had struck one. "He was authorized to negotiate, but had no right to agree to anything," a spokesman for Mr. Hague said.

Mr. Blair and Mr. Hague squared off at their weekly questions time debate in the House of Commons on Wednesday with the prime minister fully aware of the deal but the Conservative leader only hastily informed that morning. When Mr. Hague opposed it, the prime minister went after him.

"What it proves is that even when hereditary Conservative peers in the House of Lords are prepared to agree to change, you are not," Mr. Blair said. "That's the absurd position you have reduced yourself to. If anything indicates how you get every major strategic judgment wrong, it is this."

The awkwardness of his position was particularly galling to Mr. Hague, who is an accomplished debater. His performance in Commons is the only area where he has gotten the best of Mr. Blair.

Stung by his unaccustomed setback, Mr. Hague then went to the House of Lords to fire Lord Cranborne. The move



Lord Fraser explaining his protest.

set off the mass resignation of the Tory leadership in the upper body.

Lord Cranborne's replacement, Lord Strathclyde, agreed to take the job only after Mr. Hague accepted the disputed compromise to preserve some hereditary peers for a transitional period in exchange for a more cooperative attitude toward the government.

Mr. Hague has emerged weakened from the clash and with his party increasingly distracted by internal feuds from fulfilling its opposition role.

Lord Cranborne, whose ancestors include a prime minister and a number of public figures who have resigned or been impeached, has emerged more serenely. Coming out of his Chelsea home on Thursday morning, he said, "I am looking forward to a life of leisure."

SUDAN: 2 Roman Catholic Priests on Trial for Bombings Could Face Crucifixion

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people from the south of Sudan, a black African, largely Christian region that has been at war with the Arab, strongly Muslim north for 15 years.

All but two of the priests' 18 co-defendants are southerners who, like an estimated 1.8 million others over the last 15 years, fled the fighting in the rural south and settled near Khartoum. The dusty shantytowns that harbor the transplanted southerners, many containing makeshift churches, now account for 40 percent of the Khartoum population, encroaching the capital in a pattern that looks something like a noose to apprehensive government officials.

Last month, in a routine demolition of another sort, government bulldozers rumbled over a squatter village in an area

of the capital known as Carton Kassala. The timing of the bombings, independent observers say, suggests the government planned them. The blasts, in the middle of the night, injuring no one, occurred not only on the anniversary of the 1989 coup, but also on the day the president, Lieutenant General Omar Hassan Ahmad Bashir, signed a constitution that apparently opened the door to legal opposition parties. That is something Sudan has not had since 1989.

One day before the devices exploded, a National Islamic Front official warned of "terrorist parties." Two days later, General Bashir cited them in postponing the legalization of parties.

The New York-based monitoring group Human Rights Watch said that, before charging the priests and southerners, Sudanese security police round-

ed up 33 other people, mostly opposition political figures.

"The timing of the arrests and statements by high government officials suggests the bombings served as a pretext to stop opposition political parties from reopening inside Sudan," the group said. The charges against the opposition figures were dropped, and this week a new law was announced that nominally reinstates a multiparty system.

The priests became prime suspects Aug. 1, when security police swept into St. Matthew's Cathedral in Khartoum to arrest Father Boma, the chancellor of the Catholic archdiocese of Khartoum, who was accused of masterminding the plot.

When lawyers were finally permitted to see the suspects, shortly before their trial, all but one reported having been tortured and pleaded not guilty.

State television showed a videotape of Father Boma, 57, making a confession. Clerics here privately say he may have done so after being told that it was the only way to spare his junior colleague, Father Tujano, from further abuse.

Catholic officials in Khartoum declined to comment on the case, citing the advice of lawyers. Pleas from Amnesty International and European diplomats here have failed to halt the mass trial, which opened Oct. 12.

"I don't want the Catholic Church to take it as a fight between the government and the Catholic Church," said Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail. "If they know that Father Hillary did it," he said, "and they want to take it as a political matter, then that will make it very difficult for them later if they want to ask for forgiveness."

JAPAN: Economy Still Sliding

Continued from Page 1

Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, expects government spending and tax cuts to stem the economy's fall, but only temporarily. He is predicting flat growth for next year, but "then the economy will be right back in the tank in the year 2000" unless the government pours over larger sums into the economy to keep it propped up.

That, however, will be difficult, with the nation's debts mounting to historic levels. The nation's outstanding debts are to hit 560 trillion yen (\$4.6 trillion), exceeding GDP by 13 percent, when the fiscal year ends March 31, 1999, according to the Finance Ministry.

"The fact that the national debt is 13 percent of GDP is serious, but what is more troublesome is that the figure will only grow more," Mr. Ushikubo said. "It's getting out of control."

If the increase continues, Japan will either have to raise taxes or significantly cut spending to service the debt, both of which can hurt the economy and create a hardship on the population.

The most troubling thing is that Japan appears to have no "exit strategy," said Mr. Young, except stimulus packages.

"Despite a number of economic stimulus packages, deflationary pressure, mounting in Japan as declines in production, income expenditures and prices, albeit moderate, have apparently started to run in a vicious circle," said a study released Thursday by the Japan Center for Economic Research. The study predicts that Japan's economy will continue to contract until 2001, and then gradually recover.

Economists said Japan's major problem was overcapacity in plant and equipment, meaning it cannot use all the cars and textiles it produces. Private capital expenditures fell 4.6 percent during the July-September period, the fourth consecutive quarter of declines.

"For the economy to improve, the corporate sector needs to be strengthened," Mr. Ushikubo said. "They can do that through downsizing, restructuring and laying off excess employees. Since the economy will not recover this year or next year, the important thing is to lay the groundwork for a recovery during this hopeless period." He said that instead of spending money on public works, the government should help companies restructure by reducing taxes and increasing unemployment benefits.

Leisure

Zimbabwe Highlands Testing the Waters for Trout

By Donald G. McNeil Jr.
New York Times Service

HARARE, Zimbabwe — I am nominally Scottish. I also, nominally, like to fish. This should make me a perfect candidate for trout fishing in the mountains of eastern Zimbabwe, which are called the Scottish Highlands of Africa.

Zimbabwe's highlands are the Nyanga Mountains, *nyanga* meaning a witch doctor, or his horn trumpet. They are so beautiful that Cecil Rhodes, the diamond magnate turned empire builder fell in love with them and, naturally, bought them. His former homestead is now Nyanga National Park, where the weather is usually 20 degrees cooler than in the capital, Harare.

I asked an acquaintance, Robert Marsden, if he would like to go. I had thought Robert was Scottish, since I saw him get married in a kilt — usually a dead giveaway. It turns out he did it to please his bride, Mandy McGill. It is through Mandy that I had learned just how serious an angler he is. They took their honeymoon in a fleabag hotel on an island off Mozambique, and when Mandy went to write "Honey-moon!" on their family calendar, she discovered that Robert had written "Fishing!"

We were not heading out at the most felicitous moment. Early November is the end of the hot, dry season, and I didn't know whether there would be water left in the streams, nor how warm it would be — trout begin to die at 73 degrees, Robert told me.

A QUESTION OF TIMING

Our timing was inauspicious in other ways. The Zimbabwe dollar has fallen from 11 cents to less than 3 cents against the U.S. dollar in two years. And on the Friday morning we were to leave, the tabloid headline on my Johannesburg doorstep screamed "Troops in Zim on Full Alert" above a picture of a burned-out Harare, where we were to fly in, had had protests over the doubling of bus fares.

I started to cancel everything, but then called a friend who edits a newspaper there. "That riot was Wednesday," he said. "Early Wednesday. It's been perfectly quiet since then."

Reasonably reassured, we went ahead. In fact, Harare was calm — and 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 degrees centigrade) — when we started our three-hour drive to the Nyangas. The scenery started out flat, punctuated by the fascinating balancing rocks for which the country is so well known that they appear on its currency.

We stopped at Halfway House, a thatched-roof compound built in the middle of nowhere in 1891. There, one can enjoy a banana split or fresh raspberries on the lawn. Or pet the zebras and elands eating cabbage in a tiny zoo. Or browse the antique shop, which sells the cast-off touches of the English style that once ruled the country: silver tea services and mahogany camp tables.

After Halfway House, the road slowly climbed into an African version of the Highlands — craggy peaks dotted with umbrella trees. We stopped to take pictures and accidentally flushed

a tiny duiker antelope from cover. We were later to see baboons, gnus and a scrofulous-looking luncheon party of vultures shouldering each other aside for the best bits of a cow that had been hit by a car. You don't see that in Scotland much.

Africa is generally a continent without kitsch, but we saw tiny indications that the locals were playing along with this Highland fling — there was an estate named Bonny Doon, of course, and one sign advertising trout fishing "in our loch."

Our destination was what my Lonely Planet guidebook had called "the lovely Troutbeck Inn." It was built in 1950 by a Major Robert McIlwaine, who missed the hills of his native Ireland and did his best to imitate them, building dams to create five lakes and planting forests of pines. His long, low hotel was built into a grass-covered hillside above two lakes.

We got in at dusk. The front hall's log fire beneath a portrait of the late major with his fly rod has been burning continuously since 1950, no matter what the weather or state of the liberation wars. "If it goes out," the receptionist said, "someone gets fired."

We made our way past a cozy bar decorated with framed flies, then down green-and-white halls hung with fox-hunting prints and stuffed trout — the biggest a 6-pound, 8-ounce (2.9-kilogram) rainbow. Our comfortable rooms had big double beds, big satellite televisions and big glass doors opening onto the lawn-bowling green and the lake. Each veranda had two chairs and a boot-scraper for clearing the mud from one's insteps.

Under a sky speckled with shooting stars and faint satellites, we walked to the lake, which Robert pronounced perfect. It was punctuated with thin wood jetties that, he explained, gave one the height to cast far out and keep the back-cast from tangling in the reeds. A few small, worn rowboats lined the bank.

We went in to dinner. The fixed-price menu had a vegetarian choice and two meat dishes. I thought the hotel could use a new chef less devoted to old-fashioned British food, but he may know his audience. My roast beef, for example, came with a nice miniature Yorkshire pudding, but was cooked nearly gray and the horseradish sauce didn't bite. (This was to prove an omen.)

WINING AND DINING The service was gracious and well-meaning, but confused. The headwaiter kept taking us to an oddly shaped rear table, the only one set for three, until we asked if he could let us take one for four near the window, since the room was empty. He panicked briefly, then had five waiters reset a used table instead of just shifting one of the Reserved signs.

When we asked for South African wine — I only drink Zimbabwean Mukuyu red in emergencies — there was another fire drill. That page had been removed from the wine list because the currency had fallen so fast that imports were outrageously cheap.

But after three requests, a waiter went to the bar and brought back a tray of bottles, which sent the guests who had by now filled the room into a flurry of



A mountain stream in Nyanga National Park, in Zimbabwe's highlands.

waiting him over. The poor guy had no idea what the prices were, but it hardly mattered. Excellent South African wines rarely cost more than \$15.

The next morning, we hit the jetties at 5. It was already light, and we resolved to start at 4:30 the next day. But most of the other guests were there for a golf tournament, so we were alone, and it was gorgeous. In dawn's glow, a few fish mouths and a lot of frog mouths dappled the otherwise flat surface, and the only sounds were those of dabchicks and redknobbed coots.

The coot defies description: its knobs and white face make it look like a bug-eyed grasshopper in a baseball cap. The dabchick, Africa's smallest waterfowl, looks like a fairy godmother experiment gone wrong: a mouse changed into a duck. It flashes across the water squeaking like a panicked rodent, while the coot's call sounds like a baby sneezing into a harmonica. At moments, it got notious.

Our competitors were a marial eagle on a tree stump and a gray heron in the reeds, but they didn't have any more luck than we did.

The hotel's fish warden, Shamiso Musenguri, saw me struggling to cast, put down his clipboard and showed me how to float out line and then flick it overhand. Robert later said it was a roll cast. "It's easy, but it messes up the water," he said.

The idea is to keep your fly airborne while paying out 40 feet of line, and then lay it on the water as gently as a butterfly alighting on a rose. I did get one strike, and saw it jump — a rainbow that I guessed to be about 40 pounds of fighting demon. Robert said it was probably just shy of 2 pounds. In any case, it got away, so we'll never know who was right.

Robert is the kind of serious fisherman who guts his first catch immediately to see what it likes to eat, and then checks his fly box to see if he has anything resembling it.

With the day free, we drove to World View, which offered stunning mountain vistas and a stone viewing tower. The nearby Nyanga Park used to be Rhodes Nyanga Park. There is a populist move afoot to dig up the Colossus' grave in the Matopo Hills and throw his bones into a

river. But President Robert Mugabe has said it will not be disturbed because "Rhodes still pays his taxes" — that is, the site is a tourist attraction that draws in hard currency.

We fished again that evening, competing for good spots with tired golfers. Not a nibble, and a misty cold front blew up the valley.

At 4:30 the next morning, we felt like fools for rising earlier. "Real Scottish weather," Robert said cheerfully as we shivered. A cold drizzle running down our necks and the wind blowing our lines into the bushes so that I spent three minutes untangling for every one spent casting.

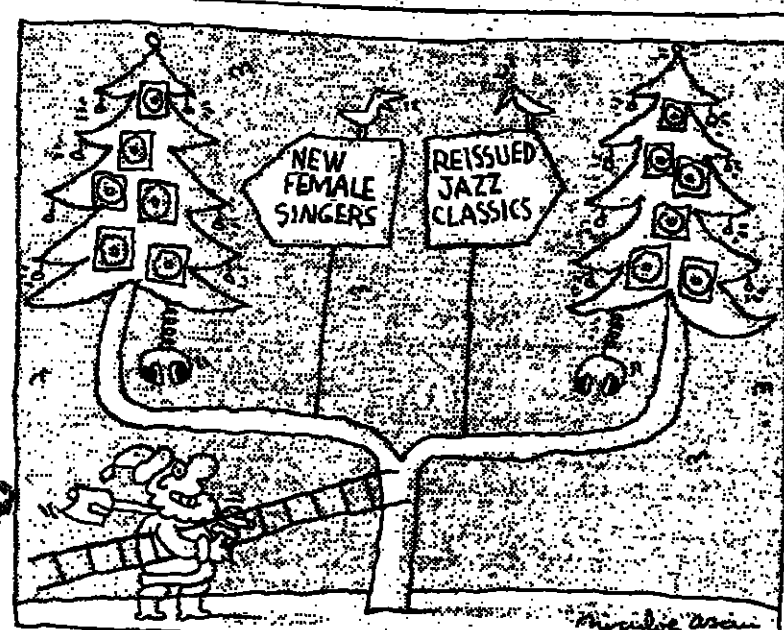
That day we explored the national park, visiting lakes and 500-year-old hilltop stone forts. Foolishly, we had left the rods behind, because in one clear stream, we found some pools with trout so eager that they mouthed tiny pebbles we threw in. A fishing license in the park costs only \$1.25, and a comfortable chalet that sleeps five rents for \$11 a night.

WE also toured the Mare Dam Trout Research Center, where the government breeds fish. That afternoon, done in by two days of 4 A.M. wake-up calls, I fell asleep. By the time I got to the water, Robert was standing on a small sandbar looking pleased with himself. "You missed all the action," he said. He had two nice rainbows.

I kept trying, but no luck. As dark fell, I walked along the dam wall. Just below was a small hatchery where one could hook fish practically out of a bathtub for \$1.40 each. I was tempted, but I have my pride. After all, this is supposed to be a Zen art, one whose aim is perfection, not dinner.

After another dinner — at which I learned I like store-bought trout better because it tastes less like lake bottom — we resolved to sleep in if the weather stayed Caledonian. It did, so we lagged until 6:30. Almost immediately, Robert caught another, even bigger trout. I congratulated him through clenched teeth.

He let it go, graciously saying it was about the same size as the one that got away from me.



The New Women And the Old Classics There Are 2 Distinctive Melodies In Recordings for the Holiday Season

By Mike Zwerin
International Herald Tribune

PARIS — There are two main strains of refrains on the record-album market this season. At least that's one way to cut the cards — new female singers and reissued jazz classics. What does it mean about the respective forms when the best pop singers are women and the most noteworthy jazz releases are reissues? It means that when you consider all the rest in addition, there's a lot to listen to. And then, hats off to Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention — "everybody's relatives" — are a refrain by themselves.

AHMAD JAMAL TRIO "Live at the Pershing" (2 CDs, Chess/GRP). If ever an album deserved to be called seminal, it is this reissue from 1958. "But Not for Me" (the subtitle) and "Surrey With the Fringe on Top" were Jamal's best-known early minimalist masterpieces. He was a lesson in implication, in how to leave out the unessential. The low customer hubbub soothes the trio, helping them build a bridge between cocktail (entertainment) and jazz (creative) piano. (The difference, as Toots Thielemans once said, "depends on who's drinking the cocktails.")

LAURYN HILL "The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill" (Ruffhouse/Columbia). Hill's first solo album sold 420,000 copies in its first week of release — breaking Madonna's record for the most sales in that span by a woman. Hill was the female rapper in the Fugees, which was made up of three extremely talented but now, alas, former best friends. She is perhaps the most successfully adventurous rapper working today, overflowing the stylistic boundary. It's rap with the normal advanced bass and programmed drums but on an unusually refined level, not something lame and tame just profiting from the name. Yet she also tackles vocally embellished, spine-tingling soul ballads with instrumental and choral finesse.

JOHN COLTRANE "The Classic Quartet — Complete Studio Recordings" (Impulse!). A seasonally packaged super-sound-quality eight-CD box featuring a 100-page booklet and 66 tracks including "The Inchworm," "Greensleeves," "A Love Supreme," "Ascension" and "Meditations." The quartet-in-a-studio format spares the listener Trane's sometimes frustrating excess of search in relation to find. And there is studio-quality control (rare depth of sound), plus the only horn is blown by the hornblower we really want to hear. No weak live sets with hour-long bandstand solos to preserve only because they are there. An intelligent filtering rather than an entire inconsistent body of work, the luxurious touchy-feely product deserves a Grammy on its own.

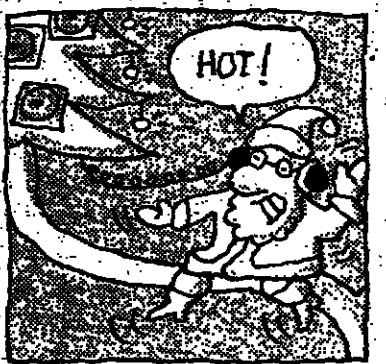


JONI MITCHELL "Taming the Tiger" (Reprise). One of the most imposing and durable female singer-songwriters of our time, now 35, has a new release after years of silence. The evidence is that she too has learned about minimalism. Space and texture are woven with Wayne Shorter's saxophone and Brian Blade's drums. The instruments, or rather the instrumentalists, are part of the front line with her rather than something secondary in the background. New and yet somehow well broken in, it's classic. She seduces young and old alike with

such new originals as "Harlem in Havana" ("Silver spangles/See 'em dangle/in the farm boys' eyes") and "Face Lift" ("You know/Happiness/Is the best/Face lift").

HERBIE HANCOCK "Mr. Funk" (Columbia). Music built for speed. Break the five-mile jog, the 10-traffic-light barrier up Third Avenue. From "Watermelon Man" to "Cantaloupe Island" and "Rock It," Hancock covers a distance all the way from D (distortion) to E (electronics) to F (funk and fusion). Which is plenty far enough — no quibbles, please. Commercial compromise sounds like a heap of fun. Never has such a monster covered so much ground and back so fast.

VIRGINIA RODRIGUES "Sol Negro" (Hannibal). Her angelic voice marries a unique timbre with a



profound sensibility. She was born and raised in Salvador de Bahia, where African culture meets Portuguese. Her voice transcends the distinction between erudite and popular. Caetano Veloso, the singer-songwriter who produced the album (the title means "Black Sun"), cried when he first heard her. He said "to hear the celestial voice that came out of the plump body of a robust black woman, moved me greatly." The songs sound more like opera arias or lieder than samba.

MILES DAVIS "Complete Birth of the Cool" (Capitol). Fifty years ago, September 1948, Miles Davis led his first band during a two-week stand at the Royal Roost on Broadway. Now live tracks from the club have been added to the original LP and all of it is remastered and reissued on CD to mark the anniversary. There was a French horn and a tuba in the front line, and people remarked about how "cool" it sounded. That was before "cool" joined "awesome" in the great Adjective Graveyard in the sky. True as any random milestone can be, this nonet marked jazz's passing from "hot" (as in Louis Armstrong and the Hot Five) to "cool." For better or worse, it has been cool ever since.

FRANK ZAPPA "Mystery Disc" (Rykko). The Zappa you always wanted to hear but were afraid to ask for. A wondrous succession of on-the-lam humor plus unchained musicianship. Loopy out-takes and low-budget excerpts from presentations never before heard. Collages and dialogues. The party scene from the movie "Mondo Hollywood." The "Uncle Meat" sessions. Along with Zappa on guitar, announcements and pronouncements ("We must overthrow the diatonic system"). Don Preston, keyboards, Jimmy Carl Black, percussion, and Ian Underwood's saxophones. The "audio verité" story of Willie the Pimp. And let us not forget the classic "I Was a Teenage Malt Shop."



The Fall-Winter Look for Tokyo's Teentown

By Kaori Shoji

TOKYO — In a city where every second person seems to wear or tote some kind of luxury brand or weld one onto him- or herself, there is an area where the word on chic isn't necessarily Chanel, straight up.

Tokyo's street kids (particularly girls), seen in and around the Shibuya district, have long been writing new scenarios in regard to dress. This fall, their tastes run to sarcasm.

Having tired of the French Slip Dress Look — short, cheap slivers of transparent rayon worn with chunky wooden sandals that was the rage this summer and prompted a television commentator to say he felt transported to a "50s red-light district" — they are now trading in Skimp for Schoolgirl.

"In" now are well-behaved knee-length pleated skirts, navy-blue coats and sweaters in every shade of gray, the season's signature color. These are offset by splashes of burgundy-colored boas and black boots that were last seen on the legs of the Wicked Queen in "Snow White."

Shibuya girls are experts when it comes to mixing messages: demure with bitchy, innocence and artfulness, chic with kitsch.

Shibuya, otherwise known as Teentown With a Vengeance, is fiercely territorial and single-minded in its quest for hip. A giant shopping mall and amusement park rolled into one, it boasts more retail outlets, swanky boutiques, trendy cafes and "love hotels," the most number of females in great big boots and the least number of businessmen per square foot than any other district in Tokyo.

Here, fashion trends are born and discarded at a ferocious pace. Every street is a runway, every corner a video-clip location site. Strut and be strutted, is the norm. The very air is dense with modishness, inducing a high that can only be described as "textile tilt."

Waist high in fads and wardrobe concerns, the kids here, however, are not the fashion victims they seem at first sight. They have asserted themselves: if not

masters then certainly benevolent employers. For them, fashion is not a means to a beautifying end but a public relations office that does all the talking, promoting, even apologizing, for their wearers.

Rather than have them talk in plain language, the quickest way to tap these kids' brains is to check out their togs. It's all there, more eloquent than a résumé: their favorite movie, favorite musician, current diet, monthly allowance and the futures they aspire to.

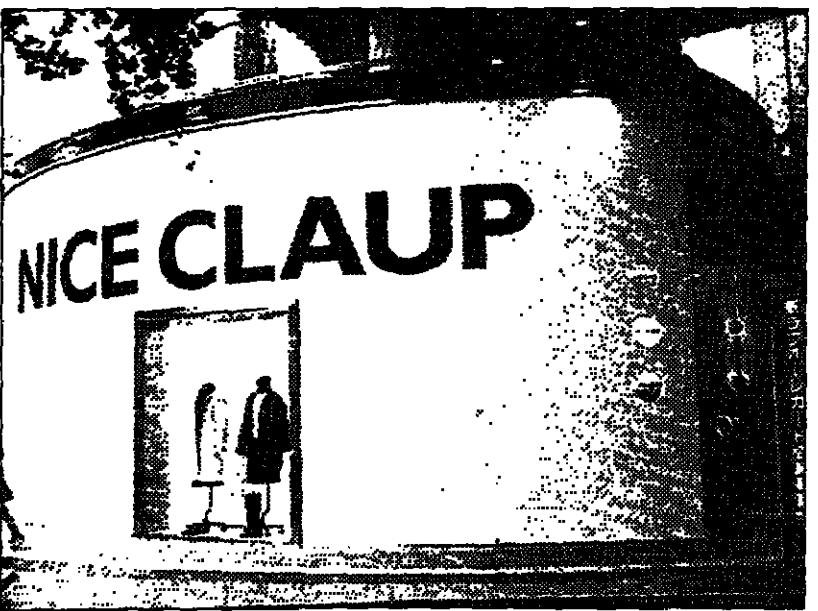
"Street kids" they are called but the tag is far from true. For the most part, they are educated, mild-mannered youngsters from middle-class families who head dutifully back home after 9 P.M. But they will go to any lengths to avoid looking that way.

It follows that the designers they support are punkish youths fresh out of trade school with garage-brand names, names that are as fun and outrageous as the clothes they make. Bathing Ape, Luxe Rubbish, World Wide Love, Nice Clap (this used to be "Clap" until they discovered it sounded too much like a disease), Yab Yum, 20471120 — referring to Nov. 20 in the year 2047, the meaning of which remains a mystery.

FOR EXHIBITION ONLY

These are just some of the 100-odd street brands now in circulation. Do they have a common factor? They're nothing Naomi Campbell would twirl and flash on a runway. Often brutish, bizarre and deliberately unfashionable, the clothes are for Shibuya street exhibition only. Perverse versions of Lolita, B-movie military recruits, L.A. street thugs, Times Square pimps, western saloon girls or someone trying to fight his way out of a burning building — the rule is to be as extravagant with the metaphors as possible, whatever they may be.

The most expensive and coveted ensemble this fall is tattered skirt over elevated engineer boots, jacket with safety pins instead of buttons, and sleeves chopped off and unraveling just above the wrist. One is almost embarrassed to show up in khakis and an old sweater.



The Nice Clap offers clothes for would-be Lolitas and B-movie military recruits; below, the "schoolgirl look" for autumn.

While it is just this quality that fuels the imagination and creativity of street-brand designers, it fails to impress the Reigning Three of Japanese design: Issey Miyake, Rei Kawakubo (of Comme des Garçons) and Yohji Yamamoto. These kids are self-seeking, they contend, narrow-minded and way too fashionable.

Yamamoto, especially, has remarked dryly that "there are other things in life besides clothes. Being fashionable isn't necessarily about clothes, or don't they know that?"

The kids for their part, steer clear of these top brands, whose works are displayed like museum pieces in large, hushed boutiques.

Still, the kids deserve credit, if only for daring to stick out. In a society that tells everyone to be identical, here at least are people who want to reject that business and all its implications. If clothes are going to do it, then clothes it will have to be.

Kaori Shoji is a writer in Tokyo.



ARTS GUIDE

AUSTRIA

VIENNA
Kunsthistorisches Museum, tel: (1) 52-177-404, closed Mondays. To Feb. 21: "Schätze der Kulturen: Islamische Kunst zur Fatimidenzeit." Documents the art, culture and religious life of the Fatimids, a successful dynasty of Islam that reigned in Egypt from 969 to 1171.

BRITAIN

EDINBURGH
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, tel: (131) 332-2266, open daily. To Feb. 14: "John Maxwell, 1905-1982." One hundred paintings, watercolors, drawings and illustrated books by the Scottish artist. Maxwell was influenced by French painting and his works show affinities with the art of Redon, Rouault and Chagall.

LONDON
Tate Gallery, tel: (171) 887-8000, open daily. Continuing/To Feb. 28: "In Celebration: The Art of the Country House." A range of works on loan from some of the great British historic houses: paintings, drawings, sculptures, manuscripts and other memorabilia representing five centuries of collecting.
www.tate.org.uk

DENMARK

HILLERØD
Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, tel: 49-19-07-19, open daily. Continuing/To Jan. 10: "Joan Miró." A retrospective of more than 150 paintings, drawings and sculptures by the Spanish artist (1893-1983). Often classified as surrealist, Miró's work spans a much wider range.
www.louisiana.dk

FRANCE

PARIS
Pavillon des Arts, tel: 01-42-33-82-50, closed Mondays. To Feb. 14: "1917-1981: La Photographie Soviétique. Miroir de Son Temps." Approximately 200 photographs that go beyond the official version of Soviet era events.



In Lausanne: "Portrait of Jo, La Belle Irlandaise" by Gustave Courbet.

from the 1917 Revolution to the end of the Soviet Union.

GERMANY

MÜNCHEN
Haus der Kunst, tel: (89) 21-127-157, open daily. Continuing/To Feb. 7: "Die Nacht." Depiction of nocturnes — scenes involving stellar light or artificial light sources such as candles, fireplace and lamps — in western painting from the 15th to the 20th century. Features works by Cranach, La Tour, Rembrandt, Fuseli, Blake, Munch, Hopper and

Magritte, among others.
www.hausderkunst.de

JAPAN

TOKYO
Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, tel: (3) 3280-0679, closed Mondays. Continuing/To Jan. 17: "The Promise of Photography: The DG Bank Collection." From the holdings of the German cooperative bank, a selection of photographs that date back to the 1930s. Features works by Christian Boltanski, Gisèle Freund, Ilya Kabakov, and August Sander.

Seiji Togo Yasuda Kasai Memorial Museum, tel: (3) 3272-9500, closed Mondays. Continuing/To Dec. 23: "Georges Rouault." Eighty works by the French artist, whose religious paintings — characterized by heavy black outlines — show a direct expression of emotion.

SPAIN

MADRID
Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, tel: (91) 420-39-44, closed Mondays. To Jan. 17: "Sorolla and the Hispanic Society: A Vision of Spain at the Turn of the Century." "The Provinces of Spain" are large paintings by Joaquín Sorolla (1863-1923) that were commissioned by the Hispanic Society in New York to decorate its walls. The exhibition also includes sketches and preparatory drawings.
www.offcampus.es/museo.thyssen-bornemisza

SWITZERLAND

LAUSANNE
Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, tel: (21) 316-3445, closed Mondays. To Feb. 21: "Courbet, Artist and Entrepreneur." Examines the French painter's efforts at reaching out to a public of dealers and collectors. Provocative nudes and genre figures catered to contemporary morals while hunting scenes filed a demand for sponsors, and landscapes followed the anti-academic efforts of plain-air painters.

UNITED STATES

HOUSTON
The Menil Collection, tel: (713) 525-9400, closed Mondays and Tuesdays. To Jan. 24: "Dan Flavin/Donald Judd: Aspects of Color." The collection explores the use of color in Flavin and Judd's works and their inherent relationship to space. Both Flavin (1923-1996) and Judd (1928-1994) used industrial materials, basic geometric shapes and purity of form.
www.menil.org/current.html

NEW YORK
Museum of Modern Art, tel: (212) 708-9400, closed Wednesdays. To Feb. 2: "Miro's Black and Red Series: A New Acquisition in Context." Eight entries from the Black and Red series form the core of the exhibition, together with 150 prints, illustrated books, drawings, posters, photographs, paintings and sculptures by Miro and his contemporaries.
www.moma.org

WASHINGTON
National Gallery of Art, tel: (202) 737-4215, open daily. To Feb. 15: "Edo: Art in Japan, 1615-1868." From this period of peace and prosperity under the Tokugawa shoguns, 300 painted scrolls, screens, costumes, armor, sculpture, ceramics and lacquer.
www.nga.gov

CLOSING SOON

ASIA
Dec. 6: "Claude Lorrain and the Ideal Landscape." The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo.
Dec. 8: "Is This Art?" Kawamura Memorial Museum of Art, Sekura, Chiba Prefecture, Japan.
Dec. 6: "The Poetry of Pale Light: The Paintings of Yoshida Yoshihiko." Setagaya Art Museum, Tokyo.
Dec. 6: "Masterpieces of Chinese Ceramics From the Percival David Collection, London." Sezon Museum of Art, Tokyo.
Dec. 8: "Masterworks From the Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection." Matsuzakaya Art Museum, Nagoya, Japan.

Compiled by Elisabeth Hopkins

THE CAR COLUMN

Alfa Romeo Keeps Good Times Rolling

By Gavin Green

ALF A ROMEO has had little to cheer about in the past couple of decades. A company once synonymous with great-to-drive sports sedans at a great price — mini Ferraris for the cost of a Ford — it has been in a deep slump, not helped by having the Italian state as owner and strategic overseer.

The low point was probably the early '80s, when the Arna went on sale. That car was a joint venture with Nissan, which wanted to make its Nissan Cherry, one of the world's most uninteresting cars, in Europe, in a Trojan Horse-style operation. It was suggested that Alfa's Pomigliano factory near Naples would be the ideal site.

Of course, the correct strategy would have been the reverse: Get Nissan to make Alfa Romeos. Italian design flair married to Japanese production thoroughness! The Arna — Japanese flair married to Italian thoroughness — turned out to be as misguided as a Sumo wrestler on an Armani catwalk.

But once the Italian government sold Alfa to Fiat, Alfa slowly started to prosper. The big breakthrough came last year, when the 156 was launched. It won Europe's Car of the Year prize — a first for Alfa — and, even more important, has gone on to win a record number of customers in 60 countries around the globe.

Little wonder that Alfa's latest new model, the 166, is very much from the 156 template. The 166 is a bigger car, competing in the BMW 5-series/Mercedes E-class category. The design is the work of Walter de Silva, the 156's creator, and was one of his last jobs before he was poached by Volkswagen.

It looks like an elongated 156, although like any stretch of a gorgeous basic shape, the proportions aren't quite as fetching. The nose is a little too long and beaky, and it lacks some of the 156's delicious details, like those hidden rear-door handles, subtly incorporated into

the 156's back pillars. Still, it is a striking and handsome car, and more of a head turner than any of the competition.

There are twin-cam four-cylinder and V-6 engines on offer, as well as Alfa's excellent "common rail" turbodiesel motor, but the clever choice is the 3.0-liter V-6. The Alfa V-6 is one of the world's great engines, as mellifluous as it is muscular, and nothing looks fairer when you open the hood.

Character — that indefinable "something" that separates great cars from good cars — is a key to the 156, and the 166 has it in spades as well. The car serenades you with its engine, captivates you with its shape and pampers you in a cabin that is comfortable and much better built than any Alfa of recent memory. Only the fake wood on the dash is jarring. The four-cylinder model has brushed alloy, which looks much nicer.

MADE FOR THE DRIVER The handling is excellent and so is the steering. It feels like a small car to drive, and in the back seat, it feels like a small car to be in. Like all Alfas, it is a car aimed at those who want to spend time in the front, behind the wheel. Those who wish to be chauffeured will shop elsewhere.

No doubt many wealthy executives will shop elsewhere too, for highly regarded German cars dominate this class, and Alfa's poor reputation for quality will take many years to overturn. But the Alfa renaissance is well and truly under way. The 156 was the first hint of good times ahead. The 166 is further proof.

Alfa Romeo 166. About \$50,000. V-6 engine, 2959cc, 226 bhp at 6,200 rpm. Front-wheel drive, six-speed manual transmission (automatic also available). Top speed: 240 kph (149 mph). Acceleration: 0-100 kph in 7.8 seconds. Average fuel consumption: 12.5 liters per 100 kilometers.

Next: The Smart car

Gavin Green is editor in chief of Car magazine.



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

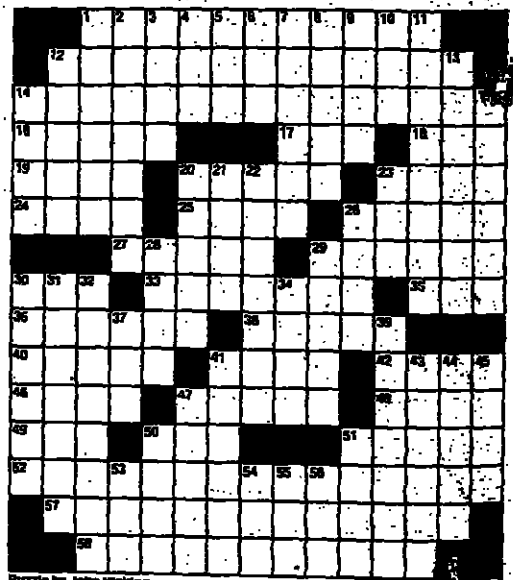
- 1 His last words were "Thus, I give up the spear!"
- 12 Ward Cleaver and others
- 14 Hold back
- 16 First sign
- 17 Identify
- 18 Abbr. on a relief map
- 19 Caesar's partner
- 20 Limited support?
- 21 Mantle
- 22 Asteroid first seen in 1898
- 25 It may be seen breaking out

DOWN

- 26 Bounty
- 27 One available for the taking?
- 28 Take a stripe from
- 30 N.Y.P.D. notice
- 33 Foundation, often
- 35 Alphabet run
- 36 Lane in the main
- 38 Kind of wave
- 40 Cartographic extra
- 41 Cork out
- 42 Strains at
- 43 Covent Garden
- 46 Lady chapel locale
- 47 Old-fashioned

Solution to Puzzle of Dec. 3

HUGO HEDI SPAM
ALAN VOTES ARNO
WEVERBERG LITDOWN
KEENAN AVER MAD
DYES EYESORE
ATM OENL OWL
SHETURNEDOUSOUT
HABER COOL LOR
TVEBERMARENKIN
MIR SEGA ALT
AMISTAD OESK
RAD EROS NELLEIE
SHEBRUSHEDMEOFF
ORAL REINA PEST
NEST ESPO TWOS



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BOOKS

WITH OSSIE AND RUBY:
In This Life Together

By Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee.
476 pages. \$25. Morrow.

Reviewed by Jonathan Yardley

OSSIE DAVIS notes that although he and his wife, Ruby Dee, "have been regarded as successful actors working continually in the entertainment industry for over 50 years," they are not "celebrities" in the common, tabloid sense of the word.

"Neither of us," he observes, "has appeared in a 'breakthrough' role, or series of roles that finally elevated us to the ultimate heights of stardom." They have appeared in scores of roles, but each has approached stardom only once: Dee as the mother in Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun" and Davis as the title character in his own "Purlie Victorious."

Their stories are interesting, instead, for deeper and more complicated reasons than mere celebrity. Though they are skilled and immensely appealing performers — and though Davis, into the bargain, is a gifted if underrated writer — this is not where their real distinction lies. Above all they are notable for solidarity of character, loyalty to each other and their (by now) large extended family, and commitment to what they call "the Struggle," which they define as "the fight to end slavery, the battle to vote, the antilynching crusade; campaigns against racism, bigotry and prejudice; the battle to end McCarthy and his 'ism'."

As anyone knows who has followed their long careers they are quite different people. Dee is small, light-skinned, strong but gentle, quiet, beautiful in ways at once ethereal and girlish. Davis is large, dark-skinned, bumptious, roughly and unconventionally hand-

some. Dee, who is in her seventies (and keeps her exact age a closely guarded secret), grew up in Harlem; Davis, who is 81, grew up in rural Georgia. But there are also important similarities. Both came from loving but poor families with strong fathers, both were exposed early to racial prejudice, though not surprisingly it was Davis in the Deep South who felt it most pointedly and painfully, and both had the good fortune for black Americans of their generation to receive college educations. Dee at Hunter College in New York City and Davis at Howard University in Washington.

In this memoir, which is narrated in alternating voices — the authors thank Sydne Mahone for helping them "with the organization of the material" — the two look back across what are, obviously, long and productive lives, nearly a half-century of which has been spent as husband and wife; they were married in New Jersey, where "you could get married in one day," on Dec. 9, 1948. Like many people who have chosen the theater as their livelihood, they began hesitantly, had protracted and occasionally discouraging apprenticeships, and only gradually achieved prominence and respect; also, like many other actors whose work has chiefly been in the theater rather than the movies and television, they understand that their roles have been more important than they are, that the true actor's task is to subordinate himself to the characters he plays instead of making them merely a projection of himself.

"Ruby and I have been lucky," Davis says. "We have managed to stay close to the very heart and center of the Struggle, invited in by whoever needed our talents; and yet we have remained in very essential ways detached and self-sufficient. Children of the Struggle, indeed — it is not inconceivable that, had it been called for, we would have given our

lives, but never did it become the ruler of our lives."

The most important and revealing case in point is "Purlie Victorious," which as Davis acknowledges had its origins in "venom, rage and hate" that produced "not humans, but caricatures"; only when he turned it into a comedy, "laughing to keep from crying," in which blacks as well as whites were the sources and objects of humor, did it achieve humanity and find, at least to some measure, a popular audience far larger than the active battalions of "the Struggle."

Neither Davis nor Dee has always been able to resist the lure of the rhetorical and the doctrinaire. As a youth who had only recently come to Harlem from Georgia by way of Washington and Howard, Davis had receptive ears for Communists with whom he spoke there; they "seemed not only to be clear thinkers and patient teachers, but also were action-prone." "I was never a Communist," he says, "but I was a fellow traveler." He then adds the crucial distinction: "Though layered, my loyalty was never split; always at the bottom, even if I did have to constantly shuffle my tactics, was black itself. I was 'red' only when I thought it a smarter way of being 'black.'"

Throughout their careers Davis and Dee mostly have played parts written specifically for black actors — they have also performed "white" parts in plays by Shakespeare and Eugene O'Neill, among others — and have done so with self-evident pride. But though their race has defined their careers and their lives in central and inescapable ways, it has limited neither. At the same time that they have fought "the Struggle," they have transcended it, in so doing making powerful and persuasive examples of themselves.

Washington Post Service

BRIDGE

By Alan Truscott

AT the American Contract Bridge League's Fall Nationals, which took place in Orlando, Florida over a 10 day period, the array of events concluded with the Reisinger Board-a-Match Team Championship.

When the nationals were held seven years ago, there were almost 15,000 tables in play, setting a tournament record. The diagramed deal featured a remarkable defensive effort by Bob Hamman, then and now the world's top-ranked player.

He sat West and defended three no-trump, reached after bidding that was both revealing and misleading. The two-diamond bid was artificial

and forcing. Two spades showed support and two no-trump was forcing.

Hamman led the diamond

NORTH
♠ 8782
♥ A854
♦ A93
♣ 10

EAST (D)
♠ 543
♥ 10763
♦ K5
♣ 8552

SOUTH
♠ KJ
♥ QJ
♦ 9742
♣ AK743

Neither side was vulnerable. The

bidding:
East South West North
Pass 1♣ Pass 1♣
Pass 1NT Pass 2♣
Pass 2♣ Pass 3NT
Pass 3♣ Pass 3NT
Pass Pass Pass

West led the diamond jack.

jack and South played the queen from dummy, a move he later regretted. East won with the king and returned the suit, driving out the ace.

South led a spade to the king and Hamman won with the ace. He now believed that South's distribution was 3-2-3-5 or 3-3-2-5 and led the diamond ten in the expectation of cashing two winners. It was a blow to see his partner discard, for he had now established the nine in the closed hand. The position is shown at right.

Hamman now calculated that his cause was hopeless if South's remaining spade was a small card. The declarer would be able to finesse the nine and run the suit.

He considered the prospects if South held the spade

jack. Passive defense would fail, but there was a remarkable possibility. He led the heart king, ruining South's communications. There was no longer any way to bring home the spade suit, and the contract had to fail.

NORTH
♠ 8782
♥ A854
♦ A93
♣ 10

EAST
♠ 5
♥ 10763
♦ K5
♣ 8552

SOUTH
♠ KJ
♥ QJ
♦ 9742
♣ AK743

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Denver	1-800-551-0111	303-551-1111	800-551-0111
Houston	1-800-551-0111	713-551-1111	800-551-0111
Los Angeles	1-800-551-0111	213-551-1111	800-551-0111
Minneapolis	1-800-551-0111	612-551-1111	800-551-0111
New York	1-800-551-0111	212-551-1111	800-551-0111
Philadelphia	1-800-551-0111	215-551-1111	800-551-0111
Portland	1-800-551-0111	503-551-1111	800-551-0111
San Francisco	1-800-551-0111	415-551-1111	800-551-0111
Seattle	1-800-551-0111	206-551-1111	800-551-0111
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50

MOVIE GUIDE

PLEASANTVILLE

Directed by Gary Ross. U.S.

In conception and execution, "Pleasantville" is so ambitious, so clever and so satisfying in so many ways that the small inconsistency that mars its real achievement is almost negligible. An elaborate fantasy about two contemporary teenagers transported into the fictional black-and-white setting of a 1950s sitcom, the movie is like a hermetically sealed biosphere with an air leak. It sets up a fabulous alternate universe that operates separately from this one, and then it proceeds to break one of its own cardinal rules. As an escape from his unhappy home life and the troubles of the modern world, David (Tobey Maguire) watches daily reruns of "Pleasantville," a show like "Father Knows Best." One day, along with his tranny sister Jennifer (Reese Witherspoon), he is zapped into his favorite program when a strangely insistent door-to-door TV repairman (Don Knotts) leaves them a magical remote control to replace the one they have broken. In the monochrome town of Pleasantville, David and Jennifer find themselves transplanted into the roles of Bud and Mary Sue Parker, trapped in a white-bread family where dad George (William H. Macy) is always in a suit and perpetually aproned mom Betty (Joan Allen) seems to live in the kitchen. Slowly, slowly, with the disruptive arrival of David, who can't accept the mindless rote, the town begins to change into color — first a rose, then a comb, then a clock, then several of the townsfolk themselves. Those Pleasantvillagers who remain black and white, under the leadership of the town demagogue, Big Bob (J.T. Walsh), form angry posses to denounce the "coloreds." The buoyant flight of fancy has up to now been a witty and visually stunning tour de force, and the acting is uniformly good. Unfortunately, here's the hitch. As the film explains it, it is not just sex, but emotion that changes people into color. Not just love, but any deep feeling, including sadness or anger. So why do all the vigilantes with their angry denunciations of their multimediated brethren remain black and white? Even within the film's own synthetic logic, it just doesn't make sense.

(Michael O'Sullivan, WP)



Joan Allen in "Pleasantville," directed by Gary Ross.

CENTRAL DO BRASIL

Directed by Walter Salles. Brazil.

In Walter Salles's "Central Station," a hit at Sundance and the winner of top honors at this year's Berlin Film Festival, a cynical, joyless woman crosses paths with a lonely young boy. There's plenty of room for sentimentality here, but the wonder of Salles's film is all in the telling. Beautifully observed and featuring a bravura performance by Fernanda Montenegro, it gracefully watches these oddly paired characters develop a fractious bond that winds up profoundly changing both of them. Salles's background as a documentary filmmaker also gives this lovely, stirring film a strong sense of Brazil's impoverished rural landscape once its principals take to the road. Vinicius de Oliveira was a 10-year-old shoeshine boy when he encountered Salles at an airport and asked the man to help him buy a sandwich. Now he lovingly plays the child named Josue who is foisted by fate onto this frangible older woman. Montenegro's Dora is a former schoolteacher who earns her living writing letters for the illiterate at the Rio de Janeiro railroad station of the title. She spends all day listening to the heartfelt thoughts of strangers, writes them down and then makes cruel fun of them when she gets home. After joking about the letters with her kinder friend Irene (Marilyn Pera), Dora never bothers to mail them. Then a letter by Josue's mother permanently alters Dora's world. With suspicious little Josue in tow, the mother dictates a beseeching letter to her absent husband, then leaves the station and is killed by a bus. Suddenly, the boy knows no one and has no place to go. Despite her hardened bitterness and loathing for children, Dora grudgingly takes him home, where Irene finds Josue adorable and is happy to help him. But Dora has other plans: She wants to sell Josue to an adoption racket and effectively trade him in for a new television set. This scheme gets Dora into so much trouble that she abruptly decides to leave town. And she agrees to take Josue on a wild goose chase in search of his father, whom the boy says is a carpenter named Jesus. Salles brings great tenderness and surprise to the events that punctuate this odyssey. By the time the travelers are caught up in a religious pilgrimage, the film has taken on a Felliniesque sense of spiritual discovery.

(Janet Maslin, NYT)

DANCING AT LUGHNASSA

Directed by Pat O'Connor. Ireland.

Meryl Streep has made many a grand acting gesture in her career, but the way she simply peers out a window in "Dancing at Lughnassa" ranks with the best. Everything the viewer need know about Kate Mundy, the woman she plays here, is written on that prim, lonely face and its flabbergasted gaze. Among the five unmarried sisters who are the subject of Brian Friel's play (and who are named for his mother and aunts), it is Kate who wears her unmarried status least comfortably. And it is Kate who radiates the most wistful, turbulent emotions while watching younger, prettier Christina (Catherine McCormack) dance with a lover. Set in Donegal in 1936, "Dancing at Lughnassa" preserves the author's memories of a world about to change irrevocably, filled with hints of foreboding that made it so powerful an experience on stage. On film, as directed handsomely by Pat O'Connor, it makes for a soaringly scenic film, yet a slightly more diffuse, less haunted drama. The play, an actors' heyday, is rich with memories of the sisters and their camaraderie, especially when their fragile fellowship is shaken by the arrivals of two men. It's clear that these men can change everything. One is Father Jack (Michael Gambon), once the family's bright-eyed brother and now a broken old man, returning from missionary work in Africa and filled with visions of a world his sisters have never seen. While Gambon's gently eccentric Jack presides over the story with a mysterious intensity, the other male visitor is more mundane. Gerry Evans (Rhys Ifans) is Christina's handsome, conventionally romantic beau. The arrival of Gerry prompts the film into the very sorts of picturesque rhapsodies that give this opened-up drama its postcard appeal while removing the seriousness and sting from events that transpire. Though "Dancing at Lughnassa" has the fine cast, visual scale and resplendent look of a magnum opus, it remains a collection of sea changes and splendidly realized small moments rather than a story of overarching action. The sooner the viewer recognizes as much, the easier it is to discount some falsely inflated sequences here and appreciate the keenly observed, wonderfully delicate performances.

(Janet Maslin, NYT)

THE FREQUENT TRAVELER

On the Road or on the Phone?

By Roger Collis

International Herald Tribune

PEOPLE often say with awe or pity: "Giving out all this advice on travel, you must travel an awful lot." I do make occasional forays afield — about once a month — mainly to reassure myself that business travel is often a pretty miserable, degrading experience. But the truth is that the intrepid frequent traveler spends more of his time on the phone than on the road.

It's a question of productivity as much as budget. I can have twice as many meetings a day on the phone than schlepping around Paris, London or Manhattan — not to mention the time and energy it takes to get there.

Phone meetings are necessarily more focused than face-to-face encounters, when you can keep the conversation short. O.K., you miss the eye contact, the handshake and, of course, the social dimension — although "virtual reality" video conferencing threatens to reveal it all.

These days, I am — like most independent and small-business travelers — concerned with costs and the bottom line. But there are times when you feel you have to get away. The social drink, the impromptu meeting can be pure gold. Nothing you can quantify: it's intuitive, gut feeling. Who, for example, goes to a conference to listen to the speakers? It's networking that counts.

GOING OR STAYING?

To go or not to go. That is the question.

It's a big question. American Express estimates, in its just published biennial Survey of Business Travel Management, that U.S. companies will spend \$175 billion on travel and entertainment in 1998, around 12 percent more than 1996. Travel and entertainment is still the third largest controllable expense, after salaries and data processing. This reflects record price increases for airfares, hotel rooms and car rentals, in what is still a seller's market.

At the same time, companies are taking more control of travel budgets, with international travelers making fewer trips of longer duration, according to the OAG Business Travel Lifestyle Survey 1998. The amount of time spent away has risen by a quarter to an average 45 nights a year, from 37 last year. Only 12



in its various forms, teleconferencing or the old-fashioned phone call as part of the solution. Initial findings are due by the first quarter of 1999.

"If the chief executive walks into your office and says, 'Cut travel by 20 percent, you want to be able to manage how you do that,'" said Danamichelle O'Brien, vice president and chief travel scientist at Rosenbluth. "If he knew more about where travelers' return on investment was, he might say, 'Only in this area, in this department.' The last thing you want to do is keep your best sales or relationship managers off the road — you may want them to double up. Or, if they're going to San Francisco, maybe they should continue to Japan, because your pattern is that two weeks later they'll be going to Japan anyway."

Another way to look at it is: You spend 10 million

on travel, you accomplish so much; you spend 15 million and you accomplish nothing more. Getting the best return on your "interaction" expense may enable you to keep your budget at 10 million and achieve twice as much.

There's also the "opportunity cost" involved in traveling to Asia when you might be doing something even more productive. There's always an opportunity to do something else. What's the trade-off?

It is fairly easy to quantify travel productivity for sales people or line managers, but what about staff people? Do companies have this kind of information?

QUANTIFYING PRODUCTIVITY "The information is there somewhere, but not under any specific heading it might be in the travel or finance department, human resources. There are all kinds of ways to get at it through surveys, audits and focus groups," Rosenbluth said. "But the T&E budget can be the driver, forcing corporations to quantify the productivity of all travelers, whether staff or line."

"The point is that when somebody calls to make a reservation, they'll get the lowest fare and a whole bunch of options including when to avoid travel, along with alternatives, and when and how to increase it."

I don't know how much Rosenbluth is spending on this research. But I'll give you my "business interaction management" strategy for free.

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Thursday's 4 P.M. Close

The 2,600 most traded stocks of the day.
 Nationwide prices not reflecting late trades elsewhere.
The Associated Press.

12 Month	1 Month	Div	Yld	PE	S&P 100's	High	Low	Lates	Change
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A-C		D-Z	
AA	15	AA	15
AB	16	AB	16
AC	17	AC	17
AD	18	AD	18
AE	19	AE	19
AF	20	AF	20
AG	21	AG	21
AH	22	AH	22
AI	23	AI	23
AJ	24	AJ	24
AK	25	AK	25
AL	26	AL	26
AM	27	AM	27
AN	28	AN	28
AO	29	AO	29
AP	30	AP	30
AQ	31	AQ	31
AR	32	AR	32
AS	33	AS	33
AT	34	AT	34
AU	35	AU	35
AV	36	AV	36
AW	37	AW	37
AX	38	AX	38
AY	39	AY	39
AZ	40	AZ	40
BA	41	BA	41
BB	42	BB	42
BC	43	BC	43
BD	44	BD	44
BE	45	BE	45
BF	46	BF	46
BG	47	BG	47
BH	48	BH	48
BI	49	BI	49
BJ	50	BJ	50
BK	51	BK	51
BL	52	BL	52
BM	53	BM	53
BN	54	BN	54
BO	55	BO	55
BP	56	BP	56
BQ	57	BQ	57
BR	58	BR	58
BS	59	BS	59
BT	60	BT	60
BU	61	BU	61
BV	62	BV	62
BW	63	BW	63
BX	64	BX	64
BY	65	BY	65
BZ	66	BZ	66
CA	67	CA	67
CB	68	CB	68
CC	69	CC	69
CD	70	CD	70
CE	71	CE	71
CF	72	CF	72
CG	73	CG	73
CH	74	CH	74
CI	75	CI	75
CJ	76	CJ	76
CK	77	CK	77
CL	78	CL	78
CM	79	CM	79
CN	80	CN	80
CO	81	CO	81
CP	82	CP	82
CQ	83	CQ	83
CR	84	CR	84
CS	85	CS	85
CT	86	CT	86
CU	87	CU	87
CV	88	CV	88
CW	89	CW	89
CX	90	CX	90
CY	91	CY	91
CZ	92	CZ	92
DA	93	DA	93
DB	94	DB	94
DC	95	DC	95
DD	96	DD	96
DE	97	DE	97
DF	98	DF	98
DG	99	DG	99
DH	100	DH	100
DI	101	DI	101
DJ	102	DJ	102
DK	103	DK	103
DL	104	DL	104
DM	105	DM	105
DN	106	DN	106
DO	107	DO	107
DP	108	DP	108
DQ	109	DQ	109
DR	110	DR	110
DS	111	DS	111
DT	112	DT	112
DU	113	DU	113
DV	114	DV	114
DW	115	DW	115
DX	116	DX	116
DY	117	DY	117
DZ	118	DZ	118
EA	119	EA	119
EB	120	EB	120
EC	121	EC	121
ED	122	ED	122
EE	123	EE	123
EF	124	EF	124
EG	125	EG	125
EH	126	EH	126
EI	127	EI	127
EJ	128	EJ	128
EK	129	EK	129
EL	130	EL	130
EM	131	EM	131
EN	132	EN	132
EO	133	EO	133
EP	134	EP	134
EQ	135	EQ	135
ER	136	ER	136
ES	137	ES	137

12 Month	High	Low	Stock	Div	Yld	PE	100% High	Low/Latest	Change
487.20	490.00	485.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	487.20	1.00
485.00	488.00	482.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	485.00	1.00
482.00	485.00	479.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	482.00	1.00
479.00	482.00	476.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	479.00	1.00
476.00	479.00	473.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	476.00	1.00
473.00	476.00	470.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	473.00	1.00
470.00	473.00	467.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	470.00	1.00
467.00	470.00	464.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	467.00	1.00
464.00	467.00	461.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	464.00	1.00
461.00	464.00	458.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	461.00	1.00
458.00	461.00	455.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	458.00	1.00
455.00	458.00	452.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	455.00	1.00
452.00	455.00	449.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	452.00	1.00
449.00	452.00	446.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	449.00	1.00
446.00	449.00	443.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	446.00	1.00
443.00	446.00	440.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	443.00	1.00
440.00	443.00	437.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	440.00	1.00
437.00	440.00	434.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	437.00	1.00
434.00	437.00	431.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	434.00	1.00
431.00	434.00	428.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	431.00	1.00
428.00	431.00	425.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	428.00	1.00
425.00	428.00	422.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	425.00	1.00
422.00	425.00	419.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	422.00	1.00
419.00	422.00	416.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	419.00	1.00
416.00	419.00	413.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	416.00	1.00
413.00	416.00	410.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	413.00	1.00
410.00	413.00	407.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	410.00	1.00
407.00	410.00	404.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	407.00	1.00
404.00	407.00	401.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	404.00	1.00
401.00	404.00	398.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	401.00	1.00
398.00	401.00	395.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	398.00	1.00
395.00	398.00	392.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	395.00	1.00
392.00	395.00	389.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	392.00	1.00
389.00	392.00	386.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	389.00	1.00
386.00	389.00	383.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	386.00	1.00
383.00	386.00	380.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	383.00	1.00
380.00	383.00	377.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	380.00	1.00
377.00	380.00	374.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	377.00	1.00
374.00	377.00	371.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	374.00	1.00
371.00	374.00	368.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	371.00	1.00
368.00	371.00	365.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	368.00	1.00
365.00	368.00	362.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	365.00	1.00
362.00	365.00	359.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	362.00	1.00
359.00	362.00	356.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	359.00	1.00
356.00	359.00	353.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	356.00	1.00
353.00	356.00	350.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	353.00	1.00
350.00	353.00	347.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	350.00	1.00
347.00	350.00	344.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	347.00	1.00
344.00	347.00	341.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	344.00	1.00
341.00	344.00	338.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	341.00	1.00
338.00	341.00	335.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	338.00	1.00
335.00	338.00	332.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	335.00	1.00
332.00	335.00	329.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	332.00	1.00
329.00	332.00	326.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	329.00	1.00
326.00	329.00	323.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	326.00	1.00
323.00	326.00	320.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	323.00	1.00
320.00	323.00	317.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	320.00	1.00
317.00	320.00	314.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	317.00	1.00
314.00	317.00	311.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	314.00	1.00
311.00	314.00	308.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	311.00	1.00
308.00	311.00	305.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	308.00	1.00
305.00	308.00	302.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	305.00	1.00
302.00	305.00	299.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	302.00	1.00
299.00	302.00	296.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	299.00	1.00
296.00	299.00	293.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	296.00	1.00
293.00	296.00	290.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	293.00	1.00
290.00	293.00	287.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	290.00	1.00
287.00	290.00	284.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	287.00	1.00
284.00	287.00	281.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	284.00	1.00
281.00	284.00	278.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	281.00	1.00
278.00	281.00	275.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	278.00	1.00
275.00	278.00	272.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	275.00	1.00
272.00	275.00	269.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	272.00	1.00
269.00	272.00	266.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	269.00	1.00
266.00	269.00	263.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	266.00	1.00
263.00	266.00	260.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	263.00	1.00
260.00	263.00	257.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	260.00	1.00
257.00	260.00	254.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	257.00	1.00
254.00	257.00	251.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	254.00	1.00
251.00	254.00	248.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	251.00	1.00
248.00	251.00	245.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	248.00	1.00
245.00	248.00	242.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	245.00	1.00
242.00	245.00	239.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	242.00	1.00
239.00	242.00	236.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	239.00	1.00
236.00	239.00	233.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	236.00	1.00
233.00	236.00	230.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	233.00	1.00
230.00	233.00	227.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	230.00	1.00
227.00	230.00	224.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	227.00	1.00
224.00	227.00	221.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	224.00	1.00
221.00	224.00	218.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	221.00	1.00
218.00	221.00	215.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	218.00	1.00
215.00	218.00	212.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	215.00	1.00
212.00	215.00	209.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	212.00	1.00
209.00	212.00	206.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	209.00	1.00
206.00	209.00	203.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	206.00	1.00
203.00	206.00	200.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	203.00	1.00
200.00	203.00	197.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	200.00	1.00
197.00	200.00	194.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	197.00	1.00
194.00	197.00	191.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	194.00	1.00
191.00	194.00	188.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	191.00	1.00
188.00	191.00	185.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	188.00	1.00
185.00	188.00	182.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	185.00	1.00
182.00	185.00	179.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	182.00	1.00
179.00	182.00	176.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	179.00	1.00
176.00	179.00	173.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	176.00	1.00
173.00	176.00	170.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	173.00	1.00
170.00	173.00	167.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	170.00	1.00
167.00	170.00	164.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	167.00	1.00
164.00	167.00	161.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	164.00	1.00
161.00	164.00	158.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	161.00	1.00
158.00	161.00	155.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	158.00	1.00
155.00	158.00	152.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	155.00	1.00
152.00	155.00	149.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	152.00	1.00
149.00	152.00	146.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	149.00	1.00
146.00	149.00	143.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	146.00	1.00
143.00	146.00	140.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	143.00	1.00
140.00	143.00	137.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	140.00	1.00
137.00	140.00	134.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	137.00	1.00
134.00	137.00	131.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	134.00	1.00
131.00	134.00	128.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	131.00	1.00
128.00	131.00	125.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	128.00	1.00
125.00	128.00	122.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	125.00	1.00
122.00	125.00	119.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	122.00	1.00
119.00	122.00	116.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	119.00	1.00
116.00	119.00	113.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	116.00	1.00
113.00	116.00	110.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	113.00	1.00
110.00	113.00	107.00	Boeing	2.24	2.1	24	1100	110.00	

High	Low	Stock	Div	Yld	PE	100 High
7	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
8	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
9	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
10	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
11	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
12	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
13	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
14	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
15	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
16	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
17	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
18	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
19	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
20	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
21	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
22	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
23	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
24	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
25	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
26	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
27	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
28	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
29	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
30	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
31	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
32	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
33	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
34	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
35	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
36	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
37	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
38	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
39	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
40	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
41	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
42	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
43	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
44	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
45	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
46	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
47	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
48	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
49	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
50	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
51	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
52	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
53	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
54	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
55	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
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57	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
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70	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
71	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
72	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
73	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
74	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
75	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
76	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
77	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
78	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
79	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
80	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
81	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
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91	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
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95	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
96	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
97	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
98	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
99	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
100	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770

High	Low	Stock	Div	Yld	PE	100 High
101	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
102	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
103	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
104	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
105	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
106	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
107	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
108	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
109	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
110	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
111	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
112	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
113	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
114	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
115	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
116	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
117	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
118	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
119	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
120	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
121	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
122	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
123	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
124	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
125	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
126	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
127	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
128	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
129	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
130	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
131	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
132	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
133	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
134	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
135	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
136	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
137	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
138	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
139	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
140	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
141	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
142	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
143	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
144	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
145	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
146	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
147	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
148	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
149	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
150	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770

High	Low	Stock	Div	Yld	PE	100 High
151	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
152	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
153	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
154	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
155	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
156	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
157	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
158	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
159	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
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161	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
162	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
163	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
164	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
165	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
166	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
167	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
168	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
169	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
170	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
171	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
172	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
173	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
174	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
175	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
176	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
177	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
178	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
179	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
180	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
181	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
182	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
183	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
184	1770	1.00	11.00	1770	1770	1770
185	1770	1.00				

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Switzerland
36 36
36 37

Lowest/Lowest Change

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on Page 20



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EUROPE

German GDP Rebounded In 3d Period

FRANKFURT — The German economy rallied in the third quarter after a sluggish start in the spring, the government said Thursday.

Gross domestic product expanded by a seasonally adjusted 0.9 percent in the third quarter from the second and was up 2.8 percent from a year earlier, the government said.

The numbers showed a robust acceleration from the second quarter, when there was no growth from the previous quarter and a 1.6 percent increase from a year earlier, according to revised figures.

But the pickup in the third quarter had been widely expected by economists because special factors had contributed to the preceding slowdown. These included the weather, a change in the number of working days between the first and second quarters and a rise of one percentage point in the value-added tax in April, to 16 percent, the statistics office said.

Economists said they still expected the economy to slow, a factor cited by European central banks Thursday as they lowered interest rates in hope of easing any slump.

The government statistics office said GDP climbed at an annualized 2.9 percent in Western Germany in the third quarter and 1.7 percent in Eastern Germany.

Lothar Hessler, an economist at HSBC Trinkaus, said the fourth quarter could see a significant loss of momentum, as indicated by the latest business climate index published by the Ifo economics institute.

"Furthermore, consumer sentiment will be only moderate at best," he said. "If demand stagnates in the fourth quarter, growth will reach 2.7 percent for the whole year, but that will slow to 2.2 percent next year."

(Bridge News, AFP)

Greek Telecom: Too Much Static?

ATHENS — A power struggle between the government and management of Hellenic Telecommunications Organization SA has led to the resignation of its managing director, George Chrysosouris, and cast a cloud over the future of Greece's biggest company.

Mr. Chrysosouris was forced to resign, a senior executive at the company, which is known as OTE, said Thursday.

"Since August there was a constant argument on who had the upper hand between himself and OTE's president, Vassilis Rapanos," the executive said. Mr. Chrysosouris "was fed up and left," he said.

Mr. Chrysosouris, who took over at OTE in 1997 and credited with spearheading its international expansion and modernizing its network, resigned Wednesday, citing personal reasons. He was not available for comment.

His departure appeared to shock the market, with the company's American depositary receipts tumbling 9 percent Wednesday on the New York Stock Exchange; they

were at \$11.5625 late Thursday, up 37.5 cents. The company's shares fell 7.5 percent on the Athens bourse Thursday.

"U.S. institutional investors sold stock heavily," a broker said. "They trusted Chrysosouris, who managed to list the company on Wall Street, and they see his departure as a state intervention in OTE."

Government sources described Mr. Chrysosouris as an autocrat who wanted to run OTE without reporting to anyone, even though 65 percent of the company's stock still belongs to the state.

"Chrysosouris ran the company solely on stockholder interest," the OTE executive said. "This meant hard decisions in the near future like layoffs of unqualified personnel, longer working hours and maybe higher prices. The government did not see it this way."

But Yannis Stournaras, chief economic adviser to Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis, said it was the government that had introduced OTE's market-oriented policies and that Mr. Chrysosouris's de-

parture did not mean a change of course.

"This is the government that moved to restructure public companies and limit the role of the state in their running," he said.

"We don't intervene in OTE," he added, "and we actually want its modernization to move faster."

But government officials acknowledged that there were problems with Mr. Chrysosouris's working relationship with Mr. Rapanos and the government, and they said his departure would work as a balancing factor.

George Simeonidis, executive vice president of Inmarsat, was named to succeed Mr. Chrysosouris as managing director. Inmarsat is a global satellite telecommunications system specializing in maritime communications. Its main shareholders are national telecommunications operators.

A government spokesman said Mr. Simeonidis would continue the policies of his predecessor.

Mr. Chrysosouris made his choice, the spokesman said. "He was very successful, and his successor will continue his policies."

Great Universal Reports Earnings Slump

LONDON — Great Universal Stores PLC, the largest home shopping company in Britain, reported a 22 percent drop in first-half profit Thursday and said sales were slowing in the second half.

Group profit before exceptional items and tax for the six months through Sept. 30 fell to £190.3 million (\$316.1 million) from £244.5 million a year earlier. Sales rose to £2.35 billion from £1.5 billion. Great Universal, which bought the

Argos catalog showroom business and the U.S. data-services company Metromail this year, warned in June that its first half would be adversely affected by the fact that these divisions made most of their money in the second half.

Slowing its drive to reshape its business, the company said Thursday that it had canceled plans to sell its finance division. There was an exceptional charge of £14.2 million for closing the Argos business in the Netherlands, announced in May.

Burberrys, Great Universal's luxury clothing business, revealed more pain inflicted by the downturn in Asia, reporting a slump in profit to just £2 million from £19.9 million. Great Universal warned in June that Burberrys profit would suffer from the Asian turmoil.

Great Universal's shares closed 25 percent lower at 549 Thursday. The company said Argos, acquired in April, had suffered from the general British consumer slowdown of the past couple of months.

GEC Hints At Big Move In Defense

LONDON — General Electric Co. said Thursday it could be just weeks away from its next big move in the consolidation of the global military industry, but it would not say whether it had a partner in Europe or the United States in mind.

"We have been involved in very intense discussions with a number of participants in the global defense industry, and a decision is expected soon," Lord Simpson, the company's chief executive, said after the British company announced a 21 percent increase in half-year operating profit.

GEC said underlying operating profit for the six months through Sept. 30 rose to £358 million (\$594.6 million) from £295 million a year earlier as sales increased 9 percent, to £3.35 billion.


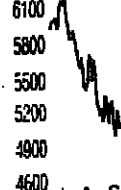
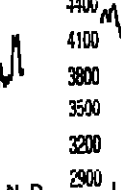
Pretax profit jumped to £1.39 billion from £1.15 billion a year earlier, lifted by a net gain of £965 million from a series of asset sales and acquisitions that have reshaped the company into a supplier of high-technology electronics. Included in its acquisitions was the \$1.4 billion purchase of the U.S. military-electronics company Tracor Inc.

Lord Simpson would not disclose whether the next move would build on that purchase or whether it involved Thomson-CSF of France. The French company is also expected to find a partner as the European military industry consolidates to try to improve its chances of competing with U.S. giants.

GEC has long been looking for a way to make its Marconi Electronics military business a world player, but there have been growing doubts among analysts as to whether it could find a suitable deal.

GEC's shares closed at 505 pence, up 54.

Investor's Europe

Frankfurt DAX		London FTSE 100 Index		Paris CAC 40	
					
J A S O N D 1998		J A S O N D 1998		J A S O N D 1998	
Exchange	Index	Thursday Close	Prev. Close	% Change	
Amsterdam	AEX	1,052.75	1,027.68	+2.44	
Brussels	BEL-20	3,248.49	3,222.35	+0.81	
Frankfurt	DAX	4,787.08	4,691.69	+2.03	
Copenhagen	Stock Market	592.51	594.33	-0.31	
Helsinki	HEX General	4,926.78	4,853.18	+1.52	
Oslo	OBX	475.58	484.43	-1.83	
London	FTSE 100	5,566.10	5,507.20	+1.07	
Madrid	Stock Exchange	821.37	813.14	+1.01	
Milan	MIBTEL	21769	21413	+1.66	
Paris	CAC 40	3,715.67	3,649.91	+1.80	
Stockholm	SX 16	3,826.97	3,856.42	-0.77	
Vienna	ATX	1,137.57	1,114.66	+2.06	
Zurich	SPI	4,304.05	4,273.65	+0.71	

Source: Reuters

Very briefly:

- Bass PLC reported a 7.4 percent slide in underlying annual profit for the year that ended Sept. 30, to £661 million (\$1.1 billion), as poor summer weather and a string of product recalls cut into the sales of the British brewing and hotel company. Revenue fell 12.4 percent, to £4.6 billion.
- Royal Bank of Scotland Group PLC's pretax profit rose 32 percent, to £1 billion, in the year through Sept. 30, surpassing expectations, as growth came from the bank's wide range of U.S. and British retail financial services and corporate banking activities.
- Reed Elsevier PLC, a British-Dutch publisher, said full-year profit would be down 6 percent, a bigger drop than previously expected, as sales in some markets, particularly in Asia and Britain, slow and costs rise. It forecast a pretax profit, excluding one-time items, of £770 million.
- Royal Wessanen NV, a Dutch food and drink company, is negotiating with Friesland Coberco Dairy Foods about a possible alliance.
- Telecom Italia SpA's new chief, Franco Bernabè, held talks with a representative of News Corp. about a digital-television alliance.

AFP, Bloomberg, Bridge News, Reuters

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

Thursday, Dec. 3
Daily prices in local currencies.
High Low Close Prev.

	High	Low	Close	Open
Amsterdam				
Amst 100	100.00	99.90	100.00	100.00
Amst 200	200.00	199.90	200.00	200.00
Amst 300	300.00	299.90	300.00	300.00
Amst 400	400.00	399.90	400.00	400.00
Amst 500	500.00	499.90	500.00	500.00
Amst 600	600.00	599.90	600.00	600.00
Amst 700	700.00	699.90	700.00	700.00
Amst 800	800.00	799.90	800.00	800.00
Amst 900	900.00	899.90	900.00	900.00
Amst 1000	1000.00	999.90	1000.00	1000.00
Amst 1100	1100.00	1099.90	1100.00	1100.00
Amst 1200	1200.00	1199.90	1200.00	1200.00
Amst 1300	1300.00	1299.90	1300.00	1300.00
Amst 1400	1400.00	1399.90	1400.00	1400.00
Amst 1500	1500.00	1499.90	1500.00	1500.00
Amst 1600	1600.00	1599.90	1600.00	1600.00
Amst 1700	1700.00	1699.90	1700.00	1700.00
Amst 1800	1800.00	1799.90	1800.00	1800.00
Amst 1900	1900.00	1899.90	1900.00	1900.00
Amst 2000	2000.00	1999.90	2000.00	2000.00
Amst 2100	2100.00	2099.90	2100.00	2100.00
Amst 2200	2200.00	2199.90	2200.00	2200.00
Amst 2300	2300.00	2299.90	2300.00	2300.00
Amst 2400	2400.00	2399.90	2400.00	2400.00
Amst 2500	2500.00	2499.90	2500.00	2500.00
Amst 2600	2600.00	2599.90	2600.00	2600.00
Amst 2700	2700.00	2699.90	2700.00	2700.00
Amst 2800	2800.00	2799.90	2800.00	2800.00
Amst 2900	2900.00	2899.90	2900.00	2900.00
Amst 3000	3000.00	2999.90	3000.00	3000.00
Amst 3100	3100.00	3099.90	3100.00	3100.00
Amst 3200	3200.00	3199.90	3200.00	3200.00
Amst 3300	3300.00	3299.90	3300.00	3300.00
Amst 3400	3400.00	3399.90	3400.00	3400.00
Amst 3500	3500.00	3499.90	3500.00	3500.00
Amst 3600	3600.00	3599.90	3600.00	3600.00
Amst 3700	3700.00	3699.90	3700.00	3700.00
Amst 3800	3800.00	3799.90	3800.00	3800.00
Amst 3900	3900.00	3899.90	3900.00	3900.00
Amst 4000	4000.00	3999.90	4000.00	4000.00
Amst 4100	4100.00	4099.90	4100.00	4100.00
Amst 4200	4200.00	4199.90	4200.00	4200.00
Amst 4300	4300.00	4299.90	4300.00	4300.00
Amst 4400	4400.00	4399.90	4400.00	4400.00
Amst 4500	4500.00	4499.90	4500.00	4500.00
Amst 4600	4600.00	4599.90	4600.00	4600.00
Amst 4700	4700.00	4699.90	4700.00	4700.00
Amst 4800	4800.00	4799.90	4800.00	4800.00
Amst 4900	4900.00	4899.90	4900.00	4900.00
Amst 5000	5000.00	4999.90	5000.00	5000.00
Amst 5100	5100.00	5099.90	5100.00	5100.00
Amst 5200	5200.00	5199.90	5200.00	5200.00
Amst 5300	5300.00	5299.90	5300.00	5300.00
Amst 5400	5400.00	5399.90	5400.00	5400.00
Amst 5500	5500.00	5499.90	5500.00	5500.00
Amst 5600	5600.00	5599.90	5600.00	5600.00
Amst 5700	5700.00	5699.90	5700.00	5700.00
Amst 5800	5800.00	5799.90	5800.00	5800.00
Amst 5900	5900.00	5899.90	5900.00	5900.00
Amst 6000	6000.00	5999.90	6000.00	6000.00
Amst 6100	6100.00	6099.90	6100.00	6100.00
Amst 6200	6200.00	6199.90	6200.00	6200.00
Amst 6300	6300.00	6299.90	6300.00	6300.00
Amst 6400	6400.00	6399.90	6400.00	6400.00
Amst 6500	6500.00	6499.90	6500.00	6500.00
Amst 6600	6600.00	6599.90	6600.00	6600.00
Amst 6700	6700.00	6699.90	6700.00	6700.00
Amst 6800	6800.00	6799.90	6800.00	6800.00
Amst 6900	6900.00	6899.90	6900.00	6900.00
Amst 7000	7000.00	6999.90	7000.00	7000.00
Amst 7100	7100.00	7099.90	7100.00	7100.00
Amst 7200	7200.00	7199.90	7200.00	7200.00
Amst 7300	7300.00	7299.90	7300.00	7300.00
Amst 7400	7400.00	7399.90	7400.00	7400.00
Amst 7500	7500.00	7499.90	7500.00	7500.00
Amst 7600	7600.00	7599.90	7600.00	7600.00
Amst 7700	7700.00	7699.90	7700.00	7700.00
Amst 7800	7800.00	7799.90	7800.00	7800.00
Amst 7900	7900.00	7899.90	7900.00	7900.00
Amst 8000	8000.00	7999.90	8000.00	8000.00
Amst 8100	8100.00	8099.90	8100.00	8100.00
Amst 8200	8200.00	8199.90	8200.00	8200.00
Amst 8300	8300.00	8299.90	8300.00	8300.00
Amst 8400	8400.00	8399.90	8400.00	8400.00
Amst 8500	8500.00	8499.90	8500.00	8500.00
Amst 8600	8600.00	8599.90	8600.00	8600.00
Amst 8700	8700.00	8699.90	8700.00	8700.00
Amst 8800	8800.00	8799.90	8800.00	8800.00
Amst 8900	8900.00	8899.90	8900.00	8900.00
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Amst 9200	9200.00	9199.90	9200.00	9200.00
Amst 9300	9300.00	9299.90	9300.00	9300.00
Amst 9400	9400.00	9399.90	9400.00	9400.00
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Amst 9900	9900.00	9899.90	9900.00	9900.00
Amst 10000	10000.00	9999.90	10000.00	10000.00
Amst 10100	10100.00	10099.90	10100.00	10100.00
Amst 10200	10200.00	10199.90	10200.00	10200.00
Amst 10300	10300.00	10299.90	10300.00	10300.00
Amst 10400	10400.00	10399.90	10400.00	10400.00
Amst 10500	10500.00	10499.90	10500.00	10500.00
Amst 10600	10600.00	10599.90	10600.00	10600.00
Amst 10700	10700.00	10699.90	10700.00	10700.00
Amst 10800	10800.00	10799.90	10800.00	10800.00
Amst 10900	10900.00	10899.90	10900.00	10900.00
Amst 11000	11000.00	10999.90	11000.00	11000.00
Amst 11100	11100.00	11099.90	11100.00	11100.00
Amst 11200	11200.00	11199.90	11200.00	11200.00
Amst 11300	11300.00	11299.90	11300.00	11300.00
Amst 11400	11400.00	11399.90	11400.00	11400.00
Amst 11500	11500.00	11499.90	11500.00	11500.00
Amst 11600	11600.00	11599.90	11600.00	11600.00
Amst 11700	11700.00	11699.90	11700.00	11700.00
Amst 11800	11800.00	11799.90	11800.00	11800.00
Amst 11900	11900.00	11899.90	11900.00	11900.00
Amst 12000	12000.00	11999.90	12000.00	12000.00
Amst 12100	12100.00	12099.90	12100.00	12100.00
Amst 12200	12200.00	12199.90	12200.00	12200.00
Amst 12300	12300.00	12299.90	12300.00	12300.00
Amst 12400	12400.00	12399.90	12400.00	12400.00
Amst 12500	12500.00	12499.90	12500.00	12500.00
Amst 12600	12600.00	12599.90	12600.00	12600.00
Amst 12700	12700.00	12699.90	12700.00	12700.00
Amst 12800	12800.00	12799.90	12800.00	12800.00
Amst 12900	12900.00	12899.90	12900.00	12900.00
Amst 13000	13000.00	12999.90	13000.00	13000.00
Amst 13100	13100.00	13099.90	13100.00	13100.00
Amst 13200	13200.00	13199.90	13200.00	13200.00
Amst 13300	13300.00	13299.90	13300.00	13300.00
Amst 13400	13400.00	13399.90	13400.00	13400.00
Amst 13500	13500.00	13499.90	13500.00	13500.00
Amst 13600	13600.00	13599.90	13600.00	13600.00
Amst 13700	13700.00	13699.90	13700.00	13700.00
Amst 13800	13800.00	13799.90	13800.00	13800.00
Amst 13900	13900.00	13899.90	13900.00	13900.00
Amst 14000	14000.00	13999.90	14000.00	14000.00
Amst 14100	14100.00	14099.90	14100.00	14100.00
Amst 14200	14200.00	14199.90	14200.00	14200.00
Amst 14300	14300.00	14299.90	14300.00	14300.00
Amst 14400	14400.00	14399.90	14400.00	14400.00
Amst 14500	14500.00	14499.90	14500.00	14500.00
Amst 14600	14600.00	14599.90	14600.00	14600.00
Amst 14700	14700.00	14699.90	14700.00	14700.00
Amst 14800	14800.00	14799.90	14800.00	14800.00
Amst 14900	14900.00	14899.90	14900.00	14900.00
Amst 15000	15000.00	14999.90	15000.00	15000.00
Amst 15100	15100.00	15099.90	15100.00	15100.00
Amst 15200	15200.00	15199.90	15200.00	15200.00
Amst 15300	15300.00	15299.90	15300.00	15300.00
Amst 15400	15400.00	15399.90	15400.00	15400.00
Amst 15500	15500.00	15499.90	15500.00	15500.00
Amst 15600	15600.00	15599.90	15600.00	15600.00
Amst 15700	15700.00	15699.90	15700.00	15700.00
Amst 15800	15800.00	15799.90	15800.00	15800.00
Amst 15900	15900.00	15899.90	15900.00	15900.00
Amst 16000	16000.00	15999.90	16000.00	16000.00
Amst 16100	16100.00	16099.90	16100.00	16100.00
Amst 16200	16200.00	16199.90	16200.00	16200.00
Amst 16300	16300.00	16299.90	16300.00	16300.00
Amst 16400	16400.00	16399.90	16400.00	16400.00
Amst 16500	16500.00	16499.90	16500.00	16500.00
Amst 16600	16600.00	16599.90	16600.00	16600.00
Amst 16700	16700.00	16699.90	16700.00	16700.00
Amst 16800	16800.00	16799.90	16800.00	16800.00
Amst 16900	16900.00	16899.90	16900.00	16900.00
Amst 17000	17000.00	16999.90	17000.00	17000.00
Amst 17100	17100.00	17099.90	17100.00	17100.00
Amst 17200	17200.00	17199.90	17200.00	17200.00
Amst 17300	17300.00	17299.90	17300.00	17300.00
Amst 17400	17400.00	17399.90	17400.00	17400.00
Amst 17500	17500.00	17499.90	17500.00	17500.00
Amst 17600	17600.00	17599.90	17600.00	17600.00
Amst 17700	17700.00	17699.90	17700.00	17700.00
Amst 17800	17800.00	17799.90	17800.00	17800.00
Amst 17900	17900.00	17899.90	17900.00	17900.00
Amst 18000	18000.00	17999.90	18000.00	18000.00
Amst 18100	18100.00	18099.90	18100.00	18100.0

INTERNATIONAL INVESTING

AOL Is Expected to Join the S&P 500 Soon

Bloomberg News
NEW YORK — Analysts and traders expect Standard & Poor's Corp. to add America Online Inc. to the closely watched S&P 500 index in the next several months — and some say it is about time.

AOL, the No. 1 on-line service, would be the first pure Internet company in the index. Though it has a market value of just over \$40 billion, more than all but about 55 companies in the S&P 500, AOL has been excluded from the index. So have other on-line companies with huge market values, such as Yahoo! Inc. and Amazon.com Inc.

The addition of AOL would fill what many regard as a gaping hole in

the S&P 500. The Internet sector "is definitely missing," said Dan Mahison, head stock trader at D.E. Shaw Securities. "It would make it a more representative index if you had a few of them in there."

David Blitzer, chief economist at Standard & Poor's and chairman of the committee that picks new index members, defends the exclusion of companies without a solid history of earnings. "It doesn't do us any good to add a company and then have it go belly-up," he said.

Analysts say Standard & Poor's will be adding several stocks to the index soon because of mergers and acquisitions, and Mr. Blitzer said a number of technology stocks, includ-

ing Internet stocks, are on its "consideration list."

"We're aware of a lot of Web companies, and most people here probably subscribe to AOL," said Mr. Blitzer, himself an AOL user.

Standard & Poor's, a financial research and information company, declines to comment on prospective additions to its benchmark index. The reason for this is that about \$626 billion is invested in portfolios that try to match the index, and a stock that is added tends to rise quickly as managers of such portfolios buy the shares.

Many analysts and investors say S&P is right to be reluctant about hot new companies. "Internet stocks ought to be included in the balloon

index, for stocks that are getting blown up to unsustainable heights," said Bob Finch, a fund manager at Aetna Investment Management.

Others argue that their exclusion has cost index investors money. Had America Online been added to the S&P 500 at the end of 1997, the index's performance would have improved by about half a percentage point, according to Len Guzman, president of Guzman & Co., a Miami-based brokerage that trades stocks for investors who want to match the index's performance. The estimate is rough, he said, because it is impossible to say which company would have been deleted to make room for AOL.

This is not the first time Standard & Poor's has been slow to admit a hot technology stock to the index. Microsoft, now the most highly valued company in the S&P 500, was not added until June 1994, eight years after it went public, though it made money every year.

America Online's earnings have been erratic, said Diane Garnick, a Merrill Lynch & Co. derivatives strategist. AOL earned \$29.8 million in 1996 and then lost \$499 million in 1997. Yet with the agreement last week to buy Netscape Communications Corp., and revenue from a separate licensing agreement with Sun Microsystems Inc., AOL's profits may become more stable, Ms. Garnick said.

"With Sun in the picture, AOL stands a much better chance," she said. "It will help smooth out their earnings."

Many money managers distinguish between more established Internet companies such as AOL and upstarts such as EarthWeb Inc., a provider of technical information for Web site designers, and theglobe.com Inc., which allows users to create free home pages. The companies, which are not yet profitable, went public in recent months and have seen their shares multiply several times over.

Money managers and brokers say AOL and other Internet stocks will be added to the S&P 500 eventually, as the companies prove themselves a permanent fixture in the global marketplace. "There's no doubt the Internet is a growing part of economic activity," Mr. Guzman said.

A Dutch Fund Is Targeting Teenagers

Reuters
ROTTERDAM — Teenage Dutch investors are showing themselves keen to dabble in the world of high finance, with thousands subscribing to a new investment fund aimed specifically at school children.

More than 14,000 teenagers have invested a total of more than 26 million guilders (\$13.7 million) in the YoungDynamic fund, a teen-targeted fund launched by the Robeco Group last month. "That's a lot for a new fund aimed at a noninvesting group of the public," said a Robeco spokesman, Edwin van Wijk.

The first of its kind in Europe, YoungDynamic is an open-end fund. It aims to attract medium- to long-term funds from 12- to 19-year-olds, although anyone with cash to spare can sign up.

The Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics estimates that youngsters aged from 15 to 18 have around 3,900 guilders per year in personal income.

Robeco believes that as a consequence there is a market for products offering riskier ways of investment with a potentially higher return, which at the same time introduce newcomers to the fundamentals of finance.

By logging on to a special Internet site, investors can talk to their fund manager, who will explain the performance of the portfolio.

During the subscription period, questions mainly focused on the companies in the fund portfolio, how the fund worked and, of course, its rate of return.

"Everyone wanted to know about the expected return," Mr. van Wijk said. "In that respect, young investors are no different from their mothers and fathers."

"The investors will be able to see how news about Clinton or Yeltsin or the bad weather fits into the performance of their portfolio," said Fabiana van der Heiden, the project manager.

Financial skills are becoming ever more important as investing grows in popularity. Together with low Dutch interest rates, which have wiped out high-return alternatives, this forms an ideal background for this "L earning by Earning" idea, Mr. Robeco says.

Hans de Klerk, Robeco's communications director, added, "Nowadays, you have to start taking care of your financial future much earlier. We need to learn about investing, and school-age is a good time to start."

Educating the investors is the main aim, although Robeco, of course, is aiming to make a profit. "We're not doing this purely for altruistic reasons," Mr. de Klerk said.

Mr. van Wijk added: "The aim is to develop a relationship with people in their teens so we can educate them about investments. We're not aiming for the jackpot with this fund. We're willing to take a long-term approach."

Robeco chose around 400 worldwide stocks that were likely to appeal to young people, basing its selection on whether young people used the firm's products or services.

Other nonfinancial criteria for inclusion were popular advertising campaigns and stocks associated with family activities and future dreams.

From this pool, Robeco selected around 60 stocks, including Coca-Cola, Microsoft, Intel and Aegon, a Dutch insurer, based on normal risk-return criteria.

A share in the YoungDynamic fund cost 27 guilders during the Nov. 7 to Nov. 27 subscription period and was floated on the Amsterdam bourse on Monday.

Robeco will charge an annual management fee of 0.8 percent.

FIDELITY FUNDS

Société d'Investissement à Capital Variable
Rue de la Loi 100 - 1050 Brussels
B.P. 2174, L-1021 Luxembourg
R.C. Luxembourg B 34034

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS OF FIDELITY FUNDS

- CAPITALBUILDER WORLD FUND (DM)
- EURO BLUE CHIP FUND (ECU)
- EURO STOCK 50 FUND (DM)
- EUROPEAN GROWTH FUND (DM)
- EUROPEAN SMALLER COMPANIES FUND (DM)
- FRANCE FUND (DM)
- GERMANY FUND (DM)
- IBERIA FUND (DM)
- ITALY FUND (DM)
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- FIDELITY PORTFOLIO SELECTOR DM GROWTH FUND (DM)
- FIDELITY PORTFOLIO SELECTOR DM MODERATE GROWTH FUND (DM)
- FIDELITY PORTFOLIO SELECTOR DM MODERATE GROWTH FUND (DM)
- FIDELITY GESTION DYNAMIQUE (FF)
- FIDELITY GESTION EQUILIBRE (FF)
- EURO BALANCED FUND (DM)
- EURO BOND FUND (ECU)
- CAPITALBUILDER DM CASH FUND (DM)

On 1st January 1999 the EURO will be adopted as legal tender of the mutual members of the European Monetary Union (EMU). Therefore, the Board of Directors of Fidelity Funds has decided the following changes to the above funds:

A. Change of name

On 4th January 1999

1. The name of Fidelity Funds - Fidelity Portfolio Selector DM Growth Fund (DM) will be changed into Fidelity Funds - Fidelity Portfolio Selector Growth Fund.
2. The name of Fidelity Funds - Fidelity Portfolio Selector DM Moderate Growth Fund (DM) will be changed into Fidelity Funds - Fidelity Portfolio Selector Moderate Growth Fund.
3. The name of Fidelity Funds - Fidelity Portfolio Selector DM Defensive Fund (DM) will be changed into Fidelity Funds - Fidelity Portfolio Selector Defensive Fund.
4. The name of Fidelity Funds - CapitalBuilder World Fund will be changed into Fidelity Funds - World Fund.
5. The name of Fidelity Funds - CapitalBuilder DM Cash Fund will be changed into Fidelity Funds - Euro Cash Fund.

B. Change of fund currency in all price publications

The currency for price publications only of the above funds will be changed from the current applicable currency to EURO on 4th January 1999. Existing prices for those funds as at 31st December 1998 only will be available in EURO. The currency of conversion of the funds concerned will not ever remain unchanged until 31st December 1999. Fidelity Funds' year-end financial statements will be in EURO.

Shareholders should note that they can redeem their shares free of charge or switch into any of the funds within the Fidelity Funds range.

By Order of the Board of Directors

EURO STOCK 50 is a mark of STONX LIMITED and has been licensed for certain purposes by Fidelity Funds.



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ASIA/PACIFIC

Japan Firms
Plan Joint
Chip VentureBy Stephanie Strom
New York Times Service

TOKYO — Raising the stakes in the race to develop the next generation of computer memory chips, Toshiba Corp. and Fujitsu Ltd. formed an innovative joint venture Thursday that should allow both companies to reduce costs and development time.

"We aim to have one plus one equal three," Kazunari Shirai, senior vice president of Fujitsu, said.

The two companies will invest more than 30 billion yen (\$246.5 million) to jointly develop technology to manufacture new memory chips with greater storage capacity.

They expect the new technology to be incorporated in manufacturing microprocessors and other types of computer chips whose functions go beyond those of a "plain vanilla" memory chip. The companies said diversification beyond personal computers was "essential," given the high costs of development.

The agreement immediately spurred speculation that the two companies might be discussing a merger, a suggestion neither company dismissed out of hand. Toshiba is making dramatic moves, by Japanese standards, to restructure its bloated business empire, including some small mergers, and Fujitsu realigned its business a few years ago and is now the most profitable of the Japanese high-tech companies.

Koichi Suzuki, the vice president in charge of Toshiba's semiconductor group, said there were no plans for more extensive ties now but referred to the brutally intense competition that has eroded and in some cases erased profit margins.

The term "mega-competition" has been used quite often recently, he said. "We will consider" a merger. He said International Business Machines Corp. and Siemens AG had been invited to join the project but had declined.

With Kia Belted In, Hyundai Shifts Gears

SEOUL — Hyundai Group, the largest conglomerate in South Korea, said Thursday that it planned a big realignment of its business groups as it absorbs the purchase of Kia Motors Corp. and responds to a government challenge to become more efficient.

Under the restructuring, Hyundai said it would merge several related units and organize itself into five groups focusing on automotive, electronics, construction, financial services and heavy machinery and chemical businesses.

The company also announced leadership changes aimed at smoothing the adoption of Kia. Chung Mong Koo, the son of Hyundai's founder, Chung Ju Yung, will become head of Hyundai Motor Co., replacing his cousin, Mong Gyu, who was named vice chairman of the car unit.

The move, which establishes the

60-year-old Mr. Chung as the clear successor to his 83-year-old father as head of the conglomerate, also underscores the importance Hyundai places on its new flagship business. The company will produce 2.83 million vehicles a year, more than 50 percent more than it did before.

"The announcement is aimed at paving the way for the smooth succession of power from the founder," said Park Kyung Min, chief investment officer at Asset Korea Capital Management Co. "It is a long-awaited move to prepare for the post-Chung Ju Yung era."

The company said Hyundai would keep the Kia brand name but would merge Kia's truck-building unit, Asia Motors, with Kia itself. The changes come two days after Hyundai sealed its 1.18 trillion-won (\$953 million) contract to buy Kia.

In a further move to consolidate

automotive manufacturing and sales, Hyundai Motor will absorb Hyundai Motor Service Co., an auto sales and servicing company, and the auto business of Hyundai Precision Industry Co., which makes utility vehicles and vans as well as industrial machinery, rolling stocks and military equipment.

Hyundai Motor Service will also transfer its heavy machinery and construction equipment sales business to Hyundai Heavy Industries, Hyundai Group's shipbuilding and heavy machinery unit.

The company is keen to demonstrate to the government that it is restructuring its businesses. The conglomerates owe creditors a combined 160 trillion won and are blamed by the government for destabilizing the economy with a rapid, debt-fueled expansion that they are now reluctant to scale back. (Bridge News, Bloomberg)

Hanbo Units Put Up for Sale

After failing three times to find a buyer for Hanbo Steel Industry Co., creditors said they were willing to sell off the bankrupt steelmaker piece by piece if necessary. The Associated Press reported from Seoul.

"We've decided to open our doors to all kinds of offers" in a new auction tentatively set for Dec. 15, said Chung Ki Hyun, a spokesman for Korea First Bank. Hanbo's chief creditor. Bidders can seek to buy facilities only, Mr. Chung said, or the entire company.

Local news organizations, quoting unidentified sources, said steelmakers from the United States, China, Taiwan, India, Brazil and the Netherlands had shown interest.

Three previous auctions last year failed because potential buyers wanted to take over only certain facilities, not the whole company.

Hong Kong
Moves to Help
Home-Buying

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

HONG KONG — The government approved a plan Thursday to guarantee a portion of bank lending for residential mortgages in an effort to stimulate the property market.

The plan came as the government announced that apartment sales rose 95.9 percent in November from October, as falling interest rates and reduced prices lured buyers.

Though sales were still 1.9 percent lower than in November 1997, the gain from the October level indicated that the worst may be over for the battered property market. The buying was stimulated by a decline of about 55 percent in home prices for the 13 months through October. The loan guarantees could provide a further lift.

Under the program, banks will be allowed to lend as much as 85 percent of a property's value, compared with 70 percent previously. The other 15 percent would be guaranteed by Hong Kong Mortgage Corp. for a fee to the lending bank. The corporation, a government-sponsored concern, will take out mortgage insurance of equal value.

"Hopefully the scheme will be effective by spring next year," said Donald Tsang, the financial secretary. "Home-buyers, banks, the HKMC and the insurance industry



NEW SHIPMENT — Migrant workers preparing to transport boxes of fruit in Hanoi, Vietnam's jobless rate is estimated at 7 percent, compared with 5.88 percent in 1996, and nearly one-third of rural laborers were jobless during part of the year.

can all benefit," he said, referring to Hong Kong Mortgage Corp.

Analysts said the plan would lift the property market more than it would help banks. "It's definitely good news for the property market," said Philip Niemi, regional banking analyst at HSBC Securities Asia. "It will bring more liquidity into the market."

But the plan could increase credit risk in the longer term, analysts said. "The risk is higher because of the higher repayments and because of

the risk people could walk away from the loans because of the lower deposit," said Raymond Lee, head of regional banking analysis at Salomon Smith Barney.

Hong Kong banks cut their benchmark lending rates to 9.5 percent in mid-October from 9.75 percent, helping to lift property sales.

The value of transactions in November was 87.3 percent higher than in October but 36 percent lower than in November 1997.

(Bridge News, Bloomberg)

Malaysia Tells
Property Firms
To Cut Prices

Bloomberg News

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia plans to require property companies to cut prices and ease credit for one month to help developers unload as much as 4 billion ringgit (\$1.05 billion) of unsold holdings, a property association said Thursday.

As part of the campaign, which starts Dec. 12, property companies will give price discounts of at least 10 percent on each home unit, the association said. Some property companies may offer higher discounts. The discounts would be in addition to the roughly 30 percent decline in market prices over the past year.

Banks and property companies have been "willingly arm-twisted by the government to slash property prices," said Tan Teng Boon, vice president of the Housing Developers Association.

Under the plan, banks will lend as much as 95 percent of a property's value. Only houses costing less than 250,000 ringgit qualify for such loans. In addition, home-buyers will not have to pay processing fees, and legal fees will be lowered.

Malaysia also plans to ease restrictions on foreigners buying Malaysian property, said Eddy Chen, president of the Housing Developers Association.

Investor's Asia

Exchange	Index	Thursday Close	Prev. Close	% Change
Hong Kong Hang Seng		10,048.15	10,055.78	-0.10
Singapore Straits Times		1,343.43	1,338.59	-2.90
Sydney All Ordinaries		2,720.30	2,761.00	-1.47
Tokyo Nikkei 225		14,597.98	14,986.62	-1.93
Kuala Lumpur Composite		521.76	526.75	-0.95
Bangkok SET		337.86	343.12	-1.53
Seoul Composite Index		448.11	446.35	+0.39
Taipei Stock Market Index		7,140.11	7,157.22	-0.24
Manila PSE		1,807.03	1,886.00	-4.19
Jakarta Composite Index		393.90	396.96	-0.80
Wellington NZSE-40		1,903.64	1,931.50	-1.44
Bombay Sensitive Index		2,804.45	2,818.59	-0.43

Source: Reuters

Very briefly:

• Honda Motor Co. will increase production of its Life minivan by around 30 percent in December and January to cope with increasing demand.

• Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corp., a unit of HSBC Holdings PLC, imposed a pay freeze on 13,000 employees because of the regional economic downturn. Expatriate and upper-echelon bank employees, who are on a different pay plan, will learn in April whether their salaries are affected by the freeze.

• RHB Bank Bhd. and Sime Bank Bhd. had their credit ratings cut to Ba2 from Ba1 by Moody's Investors Service Inc. amid concern about the country's deepening recession, its first in 13 years. The credit-rating concern also cited what it called RHB's "excessively" rapid expansion by acquisition.

• India's exports fell 11.6 percent in October from a year earlier, to \$2.59 billion, amid tougher competition from other Asian countries. Compared with the previous month, exports declined 5.8 percent.

• Indonesia will speed the recapitalization of its banking industry and pass laws to allow complete foreign ownership and curb banking secrecy. Sjahril Sabirin, the governor of the central bank, said. The central bank, which is nominally independent, also will take over the licensing of banks from the Ministry of Finance, weakening the link between politics and finance, he said.

• Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Bhd. posted a first-half loss of 122.9 million ringgit (\$32.3 million) as the currency fell and consumers bought fewer new cars when Malaysia fell into a recession. Proton, as the carmaker is known, had a profit of 415.3 million ringgit a year earlier.

• Marubeni Corp. will cut its assets by 1 trillion yen (\$8.22 billion) by March 2001 because of the severe economic environment in Japan and abroad, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun reported. At the end of September, Marubeni had assets of 7.39 trillion yen, the newspaper said.

• Kirin Brewery Co. will introduce a reduced-calorie beer to counter sliding sales of its main product. AFP, Bloomberg, Reuters

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THE PERFECT GIFT

ON-LINE, AWAY FROM THE MADDING CROWD

Shopping for gifts on the Internet streamlines holiday shopping.

Yes, it's that time of year again. Decorations must be put up, holiday meals planned and gifts purchased for everyone from Great-aunt Tillie to our second cousin twice-removed. Feeling exhausted already? Dreading the traffic jams, the crowds at the mall, the confusion and indecision? Not to worry. The Internet is here.

Holiday shopping can now be done in the comfort of the warm, colorful glow of a home-computer screen. On-line shopping services are proliferating, and consumers are becoming more and more accustomed to the idea of typing in their credit-card numbers and having their purchases shipped directly to their homes or to the gift's final recipient.

In 1997, they spent \$2.4 billion on goods and services purchased through the Internet, according to Forrester Research Inc. of Cambridge, Mass. Computer products accounted for the lion's share of the 35 percent, with travel taking 26 percent, books and toys 7 percent, gifts and flowers 6 percent and other products and services 26 percent. Forrester forecasts overall consumer on-line spending to increase almost 14-fold over the next five years, from \$7.8 billion in 1998 to \$108 billion in 2003.

There are drawbacks to Web shopping, of course. It's

hard to judge the quality of a product from a small on-screen photo, and there is no sensory information about its feel or smell. But if you know what you want, what could be easier? On-line shopping is a boon for those who don't have time to shop during ordinary store hours, who hate crowds or shopping itself, and for the housebound.

Is it safe? The major impediment to on-line shopping is consumers' fear of typing their credit-card number onto the Web. Who knows who might get hold of and misuse it? But for years people have been reading their credit-card numbers over phone lines and faxing or mailing them to hotels or mail-order houses, where there must be just as much room for abuse, without thinking twice.

Most on-line shopping services guarantee credit-card safety. Companies like Amazon.com, the on-line bookseller, guarantee that

you pay nothing if unauthorized charges are made to your card as a result of shopping their site. Most use secure server software that encrypts personal information. Shoppers who still cannot bear to send their number over the Web can phone it in once their on-line choice is made.

Delivery times and costs, of course, depend on where in the world you are shipping to in relation to the vendor.

For those who don't know where to begin, many search engines like Yahoo (shopguide.yahoo.com) and Excite (excite.net) provide shopping themselves or portals to a wide variety of on-line shopping sites selling everything imaginable, from clothing, games and groceries to sports cars.

Heidi Ellison

This year, let your fingers do the shopping. From the classic to the exotic, most on-line retailers offer unlimited stock and the ability to deliver worldwide. For real, not virtual, store-hopping, selected locations in the world's cities offer one-stop shopping for the holidays.

FROM THE HOME PAGE TO YOUR HOME SWEET HOME

Amateur decorators looking for gifts can find everything for the home — including the home itself — on-line.

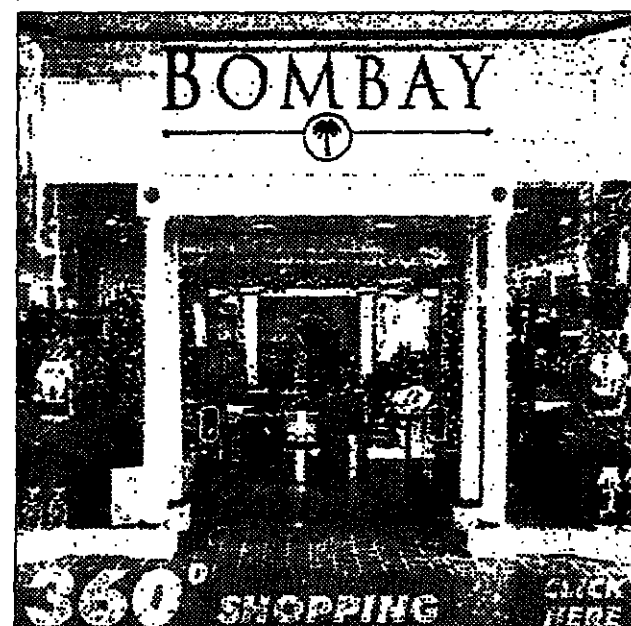
Say you've just won a million dollars in the lottery. Naturally, you'll want to offer a smashing holiday gift to a loved one, namely a fully furnished new home. Don't get up. Just turn on your computer and do all your shopping on-line.

You won't need to leave home to buy a home. One of the many on-line real estate brokers is Coldwell Banker (www.coldwellbanker.com), which lists 190,000 properties in the United States and abroad according to size, price and type. Furniture? No problem. Services like

the Bombay Company's (www.bombayco.com) sell all kinds of furniture on-line. Bombay specializes in traditional home furnishings, and you can have a Hep-plewhite, four-poster king-sized bed, for example, in mahogany-finished, hardwood with slender fluted post, finials and removable canopy for \$699. The site also provides a selection of more modest gifts for the home, such as scented candles, ornaments, picture frames and potpourri.

The American Antique Furniture Market (www.americanantique.com) has an on-line catalogue of American furniture dating from the 1840s to the 1940s in Victorian, Eastlake, Turn-of-the-Century, Mission, Arts & Crafts, Depression and 1940s Classic Revival styles, most of which has been restored as closely as possible to its original condition. Antiques from the other side of the Atlantic dating from the 1850s to the 1950s can be had from Britannia Antiques (www.is-group.net/britannia).

If you're looking for soft furnishings, Déco-On-Line (www.2.promofrance.com/decosysteme) offers a stock of 450 French fabrics for interior decoration in beautiful



The Bombay Company's Web site offers virtual shopping in 3-D.

designs and colors. You can choose from the samples pictured, provide the measurements and have your drapes made, or you can simply order the fabric of your choice. All the necessary information on fabric makeup, weave and care is provided, but there is one slight catch — the site is in French only.

Every home needs some original artwork to brighten it

up. ArtQuest (www.artquest.com) is an on-line gallery of paintings, sculptures and prints. This well-designed site allows you to click on the image of the work that interests you and blow it up for better viewing. Complete information, including artist, title, size, technique, support, material and color, is provided. Museum reproductions

from the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Corcoran Art Gallery, the American Craft Museum and many others are available at the MuseumShop (www.museumshop.com).

On the practical side, Kitchen Emporium (www.kitchenemporium.com) is a cyberstore selling everything from appliances to bakeware, cookware, tableware, cutlery and utensils.

Another service, World Wide Kitchens (www.kitchens.com) specializes in professional and home kitchen supplies, including items like a commercial espresso/cappuccino machine and maple butcher's blocks.

No kitchen is complete without Tupperware, but you won't have to wait to be invited to a Tupperware party to equip the kitchen with the famous birping plastic ware. Just visit Shop Till U Drop's site (www.shoptilludrop.com/home/kitchen/storage-container/tup) to order.

Moving outside, you can order everything for the garden from Garden.com (www.garden.com). In addition to plants, flowering bulbs and gardening tools, the site also proposes fresh wreaths and Christmas trees for the season. H.E.

FRESH OUT OF IDEAS? THE WEB CAN HELP

A selection of gift ideas, from the tried-and-true to the eccentric.

What can you give to the people on your list who already have two of everything? The Internet offers a wide range of choices. Almost everyone loves a good book, and the number of on-line bookstores is growing by leaps and bounds. A vast selection of books is on-line at BarnesandNoble.com (www.barnesandnoble.com), Borders.com (www.borders.com) or Amazon.com (www.amazon.com), which also offers one-stop holiday shopping at its new gift store carrying everything from toys to videos. Amazon is on-line in Britain (www.amazon.co.uk) and in Germany (www.amazon.de), while francophiles can order French books from the FNAC (www.fnac.fr) or Furet du Nord sites (www.furet.com). For music lovers, both popular and hard-to-find recordings can be found at Music Boulevard (www.musicblvd.com) or CDNow (www.cdnow.com).

For such classic gift items as scarves, sweaters, slippers or turtlenecks you can go e-shopping with catalogue merchants like LandsEnd (www.landsend.com), L.L. Bean (www.libean.com) or Eddie Bauer (www.eddiebauer.com).

Gifts from the wildside. For funny and silly gifts (that are occasionally practical as well) log onto Archie McPhee & Co., Outfitters of Popular Culture (www.mcphee.com). One category is "nerd essentials," which includes "a wide selection of geek supplies such as Computer Voodoo, Nerd Glasses and the Brain Juice Pen, plus our exclusive Computer Nerd Test."

For the holiday tree or everyday decor, there are pink flamingo and chili pepper string lights. Other offerings include the Fridge Pig, which sits in the refrigerator and oinks loudly whenever the door is opened.

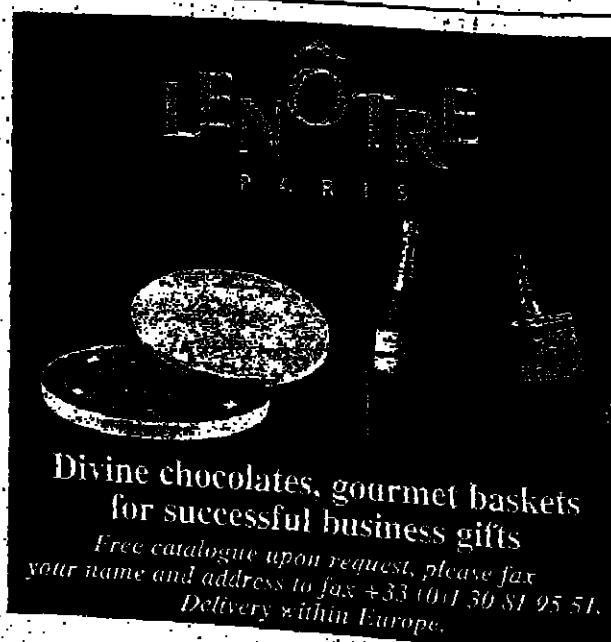
If the fridge is empty, order a gift lobster from the Lobster Net (www.thelobster.net). Choose from a live Maine lobster, lobster tails or a Lobsterbake Gift Package, which includes everything needed for a lobster dinner: a cooking pot, live lobster, chowder and bibs.

For the trendy cigar smoker, order a Gentleman & a Scholar Cigar Chest or a leather humidor from Nat Sherman (www.natsher.com) or a selection of cigars from Commonwealth Cigar Company (www.commcigar.com).

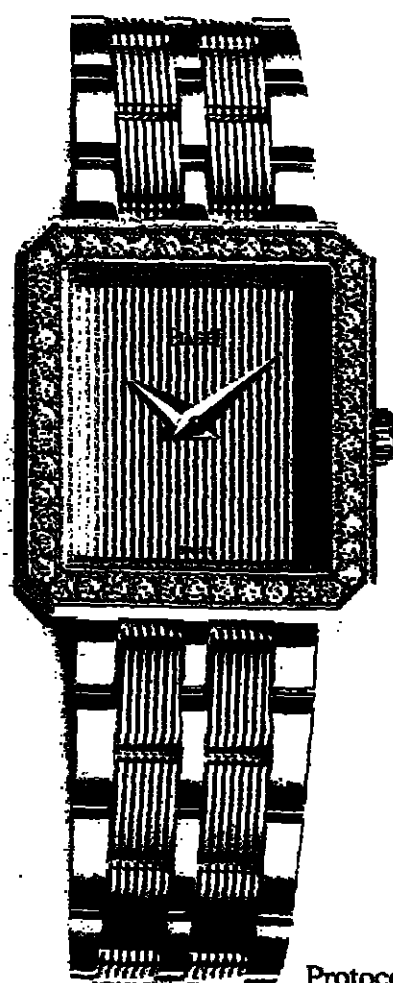
Hanukkah gifts are no problem. The Source for Everything Jewish site (www.jewishsource.com), carries items ranging from music and videos to a teddy-bear menorah for kids. Kids are easy, of course. They watch TV and they know what they want. Just ask for the wish list and order on-line. For everything from a Talking Teletubby to an Earl E. Bird, Happy Holidays Barbie 1998, Real Talkin' Bubba, Walk 'n Talk Elmo, Blue's Clues Playboard, Flying Ninja's Fortress, Celestial Singer or Trivial Pursuit Star Wars Edition, just log on to eToys (www.eToys.com) or Toys 'R' Us (www.toysrus.com).



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YOU CAN TAKE IT WITH YOU

Portable is the word in high tech this holiday season.

If you're searching for the hottest new gadget to offer the technophile on your list, the choice of products and on-line retailers is practically endless.

One hot item for those who must have the very latest technology this holiday season is the Panasonic DVD-L10, called the "Palm Theater" because it fits in your hand (www.panasonic.co.jp).

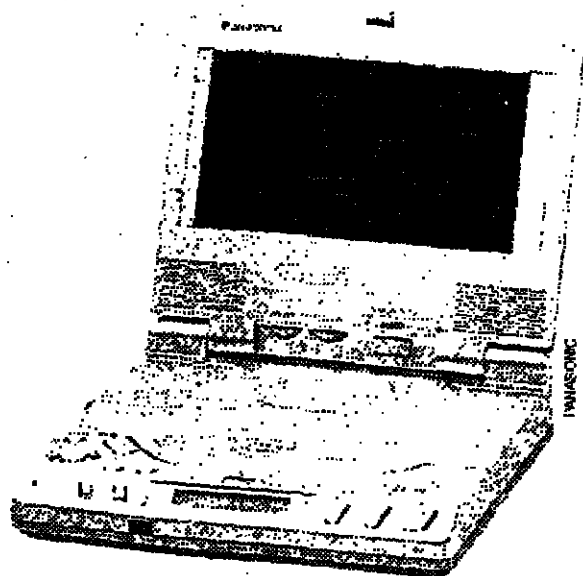
This portable DVD (digital video disc) with a built-in 5-inch LCD monitor is capable of showing wide-screen movies in hitherto impossible high resolution.

Three different display modes, normal, full or zoom, also allow the viewing of ordinary images or letterbox formats. The Palm Theater has about two hours of autonomy and built-in stereo speakers and comes with a rechargeable battery pack, allowing you to watch your favorite movie almost anywhere, anytime. It can also be plugged into a home video system. Panasonic has a growing line of DVD entertainment software available worldwide for this model and its other DVD players. Extra portability also char-

acterizes one of Toshiba's (www.toshiba-europe.com/computers) new offerings, the Portege 7010 CT, a super-lightweight (1.85 kilograms) ultra-portable computer with a sleek designer look. Only 25 mm thick, with a 12.1 screen and a standard-sized keyboard, it comes with an Intel® Mobile Pentium® II processor 300 MHz and Windows 95 and 98. The case is made of super-tough magnesium.

When it comes to desktop computers, of course, the iMac (store.apple.com) is all the rage for Macintosh fans. Its colorful, chubby design came first, and the technicians had to fit the required elements inside it, including a PowerPC G3 processor, CD-ROM drive and modem. Simple to set up and operate, it boasts easy connection to the Internet.

For photo buffs, the new Nikon Pro S Advanced Photo System (www.nikon.co.jp/photo-e) single-lens reflex camera is designed to make clicking pictures easy for everyone, including rank beginners. This small autofocus SLR weighs only 420 grams. The automatic func-



Panasonic's DVD-L10 Palm Theater offers portable entertainment.

tion can be overridden to let the photographer choose exposure control. The Advanced Photo System allows the changing of film in mid-roll, drop-in loading and a choice of three types of prints: wide-vision, panoramic or classic.

Titles can be imprinted on the back of the photo, and the camera comes with red-eye reduction, a built-in TTL Speedlight flash and a 30-60mm zoom lens.

For a wide selection of computer products on-line,

including hardware, software, accessories and supplies, try CNET Shopper.com (www.shopper.com) or Egghead.com (www.egghead.com).

Auction Sales (www.auction-sales.com) offers new, refurbished and closed-out computer hardware and software and other high-tech products, with the possibility of getting a bargain. Customers bid on-line and can monitor the progress of the bidding.

H.E.

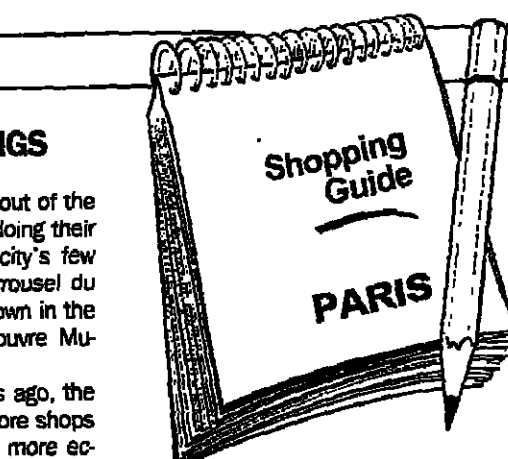
ECLECTIC OFFERINGS

Paris shoppers who want to stay out of the cold this season might consider doing their holiday shopping in one of the city's few indoor shopping centers, the Carrousel du Louvre, located in the center of town in the underground extension of the Louvre Museum.

Since its opening several years ago, the Carrousel du Louvre has added more shops — to around 50 — and become more eclectic. In what was supposed to be a strictly upscale shopping center, there is now something for everyone, even a boutique selling models of the Eiffel Tower and other souvenirs. Its "food court" is just as noisy as the original American mall version, with similar varieties of fast food on offer.

The following is a sampling of some of the more interesting boutiques. The Virgin Megastore, located near the inverted glass pyramid that lets in some daylight and echoes I.M. Pei's famous Louvre Pyramid, offers a wide selection of discs, books and videos. For more unusual gifts, visit Les Minéraux, which is more than just a rock shop, although it does sell minerals and stones. It also has 30 million year old fish fossils from the South of France, carved stone figurines, stone eggs and handsome jewelry and watches.

Signare sells high-quality luxury goods, all of them hand-made by Senegalese craftspeople. Silverware comes with stainless steel blades and handles of solid silver, ebony, or ebony and silver. Handwoven table linens and stoles might be ad-

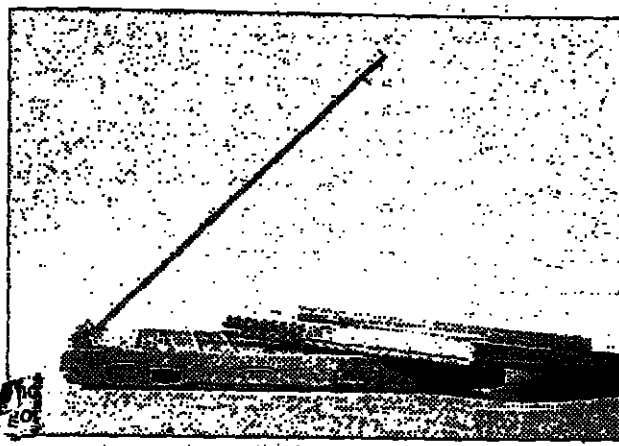


orned with decorative stitching, embroidery, beading, fringe or other trimmings. Winsome candleholders take on stylized human forms, and there is a line of unusual jewelry made of African pearls.

For kids, the Renault store has non-motorized mini-cars they can ride around in as well as a wide selection of miniatures for collectors. The Courtyes store is the place to pick up a pair of silver space boots and other 1980s flashbacks.

Les Comptoirs du Patrimoine carries a lovely reproduction of writer George Sand's blue-and-yellow crystal glassware, and the boutique of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art has reproductions of Egyptian sphinxes and Roman statues. Memo Art has designer office supplies, with an extensive selection of fountain pens. Nature & Découvertes sells hundreds of gift items, ranging from telescopes to hammocks, bird feeders, lava lamps, science kits and feng shui guides.

H.E.



Toshiba's slim, super-lightweight Portege 7010 CT can go anywhere.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK IN NEW YORK

At any time of year, New York is the ultimate shopping utopia. As the Christmas countdown begins, however, Manhattan can become a little too mobbed for its own good. When the pushing and shoving gets out of hand, hop a Brooklyn-bound L train and jump off at the Bedford Avenue stop. Coming out into the light, you'll find yourself in the heart of Williamsburg, home to an eclectic mix of Poles, Puerto Ricans and multi-pierced ex-Manhattanites of the artistic persuasion.

Avant-garde gifts

Many claim that "Bilyburg" is the 1990s equivalent of SoHo in its early avant-garde years. Proof of its burgeoning hipness is seen in the number of cool cafés, sushi bars and "Yuppie Go Home" slogans discreetly graffitied along tree-lined, red-bricked Bedford Avenue.

Further proof is in the array of idiosyncratic and offbeat (not to mention inexpensive) gifts that one can unearth in only a few short blocks.

Only a few feet from the mouth of the Bedford subway exit is Max + Roebing (189 Bedford Avenue), which belongs to two self-proclaimed "stray cats from Brooklyn." The understatedly chic but cutting-edge women's clothing, jewelry and accessories sold here are for the most part dreamed up by Brooklyn designers.

Women will crack for plush velvet scarves (\$56), unusually shaped black handbags decorated with beads or sequins (\$30-\$40) and delicate grasshopper and dragonfly hairbands (\$18).

Gift-worthy exotics

A few doors down is Matamoros Puebla Grocery (193 Bedford Avenue), whose immense window is festively crammed with Mexican ranging from hanging chili peppers to gaily painted ceramic piggy banks. Inside, foodstuffs such as cactus leaves, bags of fried pork rinds, and fudge-like dulce de leche share shelf space with less edible exotics. Decidedly gift-worthy are giant sequin-embroidered velvet sombreros (\$35), chocolate Day of the Dead heads (\$15), and the mucho kitsch miniature model Mexican saloons (\$30), which come complete with tiny tequila bottles, a ceramic barman and even a tropically pestel toilet.

Luggage (214 Bedford Avenue) is another favorite Bilyburg haunt. This secondhand store has a constantly rotating stock of clothes and furniture ranging from purely functional to downright whimsical.

Recent finds included a maple record cabinet (\$60), a festive set of snowball glasses (\$4 each) and a High Hills Day Camp T-shirt (\$5). And for the perfect accompaniment, choose from one of the many delightfully cheesy Hallmark-esque cards from years gone by.

Michael Sommers

IN THE LAPTOP OF LUXURY

The ultimate in luxury giving is at your fingertips.

What is luxury? Something you want it because it makes you feel good or look good, or because its high quality and timeless design mean that it will last a long time and always be in style.

Designer clothing fits all of these criteria: except perhaps the last one (a vintage Thierry Mugler bright-orange fake fur shag coat, for example, has fulfilled its useful life). Women who obsessively search for designer labels in overstock or vintage clothing stores would love a gift from Piece Unique (www.pieceunique.com), which carries new and vintage garments and accessories by the likes of Armani, Chanel, Donna Karan, Versace, Gucci, Hermès, Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto, Gaultier and so on.

A tailor-made suit doesn't have to be a luxury. The Web offers a handy alternative to Savile Row and Hong Kong tailors.

Thailand-based Country Road Fashions (www.countryroadfashions.com) makes classic men's and women's clothing to order. You send in the measurements, following the directions on the site, and choose from a limited selection of styles, fabrics and colors. A man's two-piece cashmere-wool suit with fully lined jacket and half-lined pants, for example, costs only \$160, shipping included.

For trendier types who wouldn't be caught dead in a classic suit, check out A.P.C.'s site (www.apc.fr). With shops in Paris, London, Antwerp, New York City, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Kobe, this design collective specializes in well-made, minimalist clothing that is the latest word with international fashion victims.

Perfume may be the ultimate luxury and is always a highly appreciated gift.

Fragrance Counter (www.fragrancecounter.com) has an extensive selection of women's perfumes, from Acqua di Giò by Giorgio Armani to Yellow Jeans by Versace, as well as men's fragrances.

Few men wear hats these days other than wool caps or those silly-looking ear-flap numbers that became popular a few years ago, and it's a shame. Nothing looks cooler than a man in a fedora hat who knows how to wear it with nonchalance. To choose the style that's right for the man on your list, go to Worth & Worth's Web site (www.hatshop.com), which carries everything from caps to fedoras, Panamas, fur hats, berets and homburgs.

Wine is a luxury for some, but for others life would not be worth living without it. Lovers of California wines might appreciate a gift subscription to the California Wine Club (www.cawineclub.com), which in-

cludes two different bottles each month and a newsletter. For Continental tastes, the French Wine Collection (www.frenchwine.co.uk) or the French Wine Web (www.french-wine-web.com) deliver fine French wines worldwide.

Children need a taste of luxury now and then, too. Yesteryear Toys (www.yesteryear.com) sells model toy steam engines made by Mamod, Wileco, Cheddar, Krick and John Burrell. These are certain to last longer than the latest action toy.

Crème de la crème Many top luxury companies do not sell their most precious and unique products on-line, so shoppers will have to leave home to pick up Van Cleef & Arpels' delicate Dragonfly brooch, worn by Sharon Stone at her wedding in February. It comes in four models: pink sapphires on pink gold, yellow sapphires on yellow gold, and mother of pearl or diamonds on white gold.

Piaget is featuring the elegantly streamlined Miss Protocole watch, with its sunny yellow band and stylish Art Nouveau numbers on the face.

H.E.

WORLD SHOPPING

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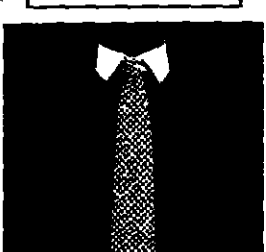
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04-12-98

WORLD ROUNDUP

Rovers Pick Kidd

SOCER Brian Kidd left Manchester United for struggling Blackburn Rovers on Thursday. Kidd took over as manager at Blackburn, the Premier League champion in 1995, which is now last in the division. Kidd was the assistant to Alex Ferguson at Manchester United for seven years.

Roy Hodgson, the former Inter Milan and Swiss national team coach, was fired by Blackburn after it lost to Southampton last month. (APF)

Masseur Accuses Virenque

CYCLING Richard Virenque, one of the Festina riders thrown off the Tour de France, took as many as 100 injections of the banned drug EPO every year, according to Willy Voet, the team's former masseur. Virenque, 28, has denied taking banned substances. But Voet, in an interview published in the newspaper *France-Sport* on Thursday, accused both Virenque and teammate Pascal Hervé, who has also denied drug taking, of being liars.

"These two were the biggest consumers. They received at least 90 to 100 injections of EPO a year," said Voet, who was arrested before the Tour. (APF)

Price Takes Early Lead

GOLF Nick Price shot a 5-under-par 67 Thursday to take a two-stroke lead over Mark O'Meara, Justin Leonard and Bernhard Langer in the first round of the Million Dollar Challenge in Sun City, South Africa. Price, the defending champion, finished with consecutive birdies in his six-hole round over the windswept Gary Player Country Club course. (AP)

Japanese Medalist, 93, Dies

OLYMPICS Mikio Oda, 93, Japan's first Olympic gold medalist, died Wednesday in Tokyo. Oda won the triple jump in the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics and set a world record three years later. He later became a sports writer before becoming a professor in the athletic department at Waseda University. (AP)

Brown Returns to Dallas

FOOTBALL The Dallas Cowboys re-signed Larry Brown, the cornerback who was their MVP in the Super Bowl three years ago. After the Super Bowl, Brown signed a \$12.5 million, five-year deal with Oakland, but was kicked off the team in 1997. He signed with the Cowboys for \$76,000 for the remainder of the regular season. (AP)

Davis Cup Final: A Great Event Shorn of Great Players

By Christopher Clarey
International Herald Tribune

MILAN — The tennis season finally, finally comes to an end this weekend, but the stars are already on vacation. Pete Sampras has achieved his goals for the year and is presumably concentrating on his golf swing. Marcelo Rios, the Chilean, is also far from northern Italy, as is Patrick Rafter, the telegenic Queenslander who is resting his chronically sore knee and dreaming of winning the Australian Open next month.

The stage in Milan — a fine city for stages — has been left to the lesser lights. This is excellent for the Italians and Swedes who will face each other over the next three days in the Davis Cup final, but damaging to the prestige of the Davis Cup as it prepares to fete its centennial year in 1999.

It is a venerable, routinely gripping event: a warm gust of communalism and benign nationalism in the midst of a generally cool, capitalistic and everyman-and-agent-for-himself climate.

The Davis Cup has an important role to play but role players have been playing too large a part of late.

"It's a shame that all the best are not involved," said Anders Jarryd.

Sweden's assistant captain. "I know it's difficult sometimes for the top guys to put it in their schedule, but in the big picture, you gain so much more by playing than by staying away."

This year, for the first time since the computer rankings were launched, none of the four men chosen to play singles in the final is ranked in the top 30, and the matches on Friday — Andre Gaudenzi versus Magnus Norman and Davide Sanguineti versus Magnus Gustafsson — would have no chance of being placed on a show court at a Grand Slam event.

That does not mean they will not be close and compelling, or that the atmosphere will not be transcendent. This is the first Davis Cup final to be held in Italy, and it has struck a chord. All of the three-day tickets for the final were sold early last month, and as of Thursday, only a few hundred single-day tickets remained: all in the upper reaches of the 12,000-seat Filadelfia.

"I think what is going to make this very special is the crowd," said Gaudenzi, who with his ranking of 44 is Italy's top player.

The Italians have appeared in six Davis Cup finals — all on the road — but won only once: in 1976 when they beat Chile, 4-1, on clay in Santiago with

Adriano Panatta and Conrado Barazzutti playing singles and Paolo Bertolucci playing doubles with Panatta. All three were at Thursday's draw. Bertolucci is the Davis Cup captain, having taken over for Panatta. Panatta resigned in a huff last year because of a disagreement with Paolo Galgani, the former Italian Tennis Federation president. Panatta has since been appointed national technical director, and Barazzutti is a television commentator.

"I think this is really a very important moment for the base of tennis in Italy," Barazzutti said. "We need to increase the number of youngsters playing the sport in this country, because we have a lot of older people who play but not so many children anymore. I hope this final will catch the young people's fancy."

The Italians reached their first final in 18 years by capitalizing on events. Their first-round opponent India was missing its best player, Leander Paes; their quarterfinal opponent, Zimbabwe, had upset Australia on grass but was no threat on clay. Their semifinal opponent, the United States, could not persuade Sampras or Andre Agassi or Michael Chang to play and mistakenly chose a slow indoor carpet that suited the Italians better than themselves.

The Italians could have surface troubles of their own: the indoor clay court they installed at considerable expense is quicker than expected, and the balls they have chosen, the same used at the French Open, are among the quickest in use on clay. That should not bother Sanguineti, a quarterfinalist at Wimbledon this year, who is at ease on faster surfaces, but it could trouble Gaudenzi, a classic claycourter.

Waiting the court could help Gaudenzi's cause, but French referee Gilbert Ysern will surely do his best to keep the playing field dry enough to be level. In 1995, when Ysern was the referee at the semifinal in Moscow between Russia and Germany, the Russians turned on the hoses the night before the first matches and Ysern delayed play until the court dried. The Russians still won.

Whether the Italians win depends greatly on Gaudenzi. He has not played an official match since he finished off the Americans in September. On Oct. 1, he underwent surgery to alleviate chronic pain in his right shoulder, and though Gaudenzi claims to be "110 percent," two months away from competitive tennis represents a potentially destabilizing break. "Obviously I'd be happier if I had played a lot of tournaments and won

many matches, but that's not the case," he said. "The only thing I can say is that a Davis Cup match is a different thing. Hopefully with the help of the crowd, I'm going to get into the match quickly."

Gaudenzi is hardly facing a sure thing in Norman, who is ranked 52d, has little Davis Cup experience and has struggled indoors. But with Sweden's top player, 17th-ranked Thomas Johansson, hampered by tendinitis in his knee and its most reliable player, Jonas Bjorkman, ill at ease on clay, Carl-Axel Hageskog, the captain, has taken a chance on Norman in singles. Bjorkman will play doubles with Nicklas Kulti.

Without Norman there would have been no choice to make. In his Cup debut in April, he beat Karol Kucera on an indoor clay court in Bratislava, Slovakia to tie that first-round tie at 2-2. Gustafsson then shook off the effects of a virus and beat Dominik Hrbaty in the final rubber. Neither Norman nor Gustafsson played in the last two rounds, but eight months after Bratislava, they are back in the lineup.

If they thrive under pressure, Sweden will win its third Davis Cup title in five years. If they do not, the Filadelfia will be a very festive place.

Juventus Remains in Danger After Late Galatasaray Goal

No Threat to Italians Off the Field at Delayed Match

ISTANBUL — Kaya Suat scored with a header two minutes into injury time to give Galatasaray a 1-1 draw with Juventus in their delayed European Champions League match and push the Italian team to the verge of elimination.

The game Wednesday passed without incident off the field. It had been postponed by one week because Juventus said it was worried by anti-Italian feeling in Turkey, following Italy's refusal to extradite Abdullah Ocalan, the Kurdish rebel leader.

On the field, the match was ill-tempered but also largely without incident. Nicolas Amoroso, a second-half replacement, gave Juventus the lead after 75 minutes from one of his team's few scoring chances.

Suat's late goal means Juventus, a finalist in the past three seasons, has drawn all five of its matches in Group B. Galatasaray and Rosenborg Trondheim of Norway each have eight points, while Juventus has five. For Juventus to finish top of the group — the only way it can advance — it must beat Rosenborg in Turin next Wednesday and hope Galatasaray loses to Athletic, which is last in the group, in Bilbao.

Juventus players had threatened not to play in Turkey because they said they feared for their safety.

The game was filled with fierce challenges. But, Turkey's Yeni Yuzuil news paper declared Thursday, "Friendship was the winner."

Apart from slogans denouncing Kurdish guerrilla groups and some habitual chanting of obscenities by Galatasaray supporters, there were

none of the feared disturbances. Turkey deployed 22,000 police for the game and the Juventus team flew home immediately afterward to avoid trouble. The Italians face possible disciplinary action for arriving Wednesday, in defiance of a rule that requires teams to arrive a day before a match.

No Italian fans attended the match, leaving the stadium in a deadly silence after Juventus scored.

UEFA, the governing body of European soccer, postponed the match by one week for fear of violence.

"I hope Europe and the world is ashamed," said Haluk Ulusoy, the president of Turkey's soccer federation, referring to doubts that Turks would behave.

Thousands of Turks poured into the streets to celebrate Galatasaray's result.

Police in Ankara, the Turkish capital, used water cannon to block off a street leading to the Italian Embassy — a frequent target of anti-Italy, anti-Ocalan protests.

About 100 people gathered in front of the cannon to shout slogans denouncing the rebel group. Hundreds of cars formed a convoy through the streets with passengers waving flags and chanting "Down with the PKK." (APF)

South Africa Hires Moloto

South Africa named Trott Moloto as its national coach Thursday. Agence France-Presse reported from Johannesburg, Moloto, 42, was assistant to Jomo Sono at the African Nations Cup and to the Frenchman Philippe Troussier at the World Cup.



Juventus players, in the striped shirts, and Galatasaray players taking the field in Istanbul.

Oilers' Goalie Just Too Wily For Coyotes

The Associated Press
Mikhail Shtalenkov made 45 saves as the Edmonton Oilers ended the Phoenix Coyotes' 14-game unbeaten streak despite being outshot, 48-22. "Their goaltender came up huge," said a Phoenix center, Jeremy Roenick, said of Shtalenkov after his team lost, 4-3, Wednesday. "He's the reason why they won the game. Period."

Phoenix, the Pacific Division leaders, had not lost since Oct. 22 in Dallas. "By and large, I thought we played a whale of a game," said Jim Schoenfeld.

NHL Roundup

The Phoenix coach. "I thought their goaltender played a great game. That's going to happen with the number of good goaltenders in the league."

Sabres 2, Panthers 1 Dixon Ward scored his team-leading 10th goal and Dominik Hasek continued his mastery at home with 27 saves as Buffalo defeated Florida.

Hasek has started the last 39 home games for the Sabres and has a 23-8-8 record and a 1.56 goals-against average.

Hurricanes 4, Canadiens 1 Ray Sheppard and Keith Primeau scored the key goals as Carolina won its fourth straight.

Rangers 3, Islanders 2 Mike Richter, the New York Rangers' goalie, stopped 25 shots as the Rangers won their third



Mike Richter, the Rangers' goalie, watching a shot bounce off the post.

straight game. Mike Knuble, Petr Nedved and Wayne Gretzky scored for the Rangers, who snapped a three-game losing streak at the Islanders' Nassau Coliseum.

Maple Leafs 3, Kings 1 Sergei Berezin scored twice to lead Toronto to its seventh straight home victory.

Berezin deflected Sylvain Cote's point shot with 9:52 left in the third for the game-winner — his second power-play goal of the night.

Stars 3, Sharks 0 Ed Belfour stopped 26 shots for his second straight shutout, becoming the leader among active goalies with 42 career shutouts, as Dallas won at San Jose.

Belfour's second shutout of the season moved him past Colorado's Patrick Roy, who has 41 shutouts, but has not had one this season.

The 42 shutouts tied Belfour with Charlie Gardiner, who played from 1927-34 with Chicago, for 20th place on the league's career list.

Aviators 4, Red Wings 2 Chris Drury, a Colorado rookie, broke a tie game early in the third period as Colorado beat visiting Detroit, ending the Red Wings' winning streak at five.

Rene Corbet added a wraparound goal with 5:22 remaining as the Avanche also handed Detroit's goalie, Norm MacLachlan, his first loss in eight career starts. He had won four straight in place of the injured Chris Osgood.

SCOREBOARD

ICE HOCKEY

NHL Standings

ATLANTIC DIVISION						N.Y. Rangers	
	W	L	T	Pts	GP	GA	
New Jersey	14	7	1	29	61	101	
Philadelphia	11	7	4	26	62	48	
Pittsburgh	10	6	6	26	67	59	
Washington	10	7	5	25	61	59	
N.Y. Islanders	10	14	0	20	61	67	
NORTHEAST DIVISION						Boston Bruins	
	W	L	T	Pts	GP	GA	
Toronto	14	9	2	30	77	69	
Buffalo	11	5	4	26	59	41	
San Jose	10	7	5	26	61	44	
Ottawa	11	7	3	24	64	44	
Montreal	8	13	2	18	53	69	
SOUTHEAST DIVISION						Detroit Red Wings	
	W	L	T	Pts	GP	GA	
Carolina	8	10	5	21	55	62	
Florida	8	10	5	21	55	62	
Washington	7	12	3	19	49	66	
Tampa Bay	4	14	2	10	48	83	
WESTERN CONFERENCE						Los Angeles Kings	
CENTRAL DIVISION						(opt), 2d Per	
	W	L	T	Pts	GP	GA	
Detroit	13	9	0	26	75	54	
St. Louis	9	9	5	23	47	47	
Nashville	9	13	1	19	54	71	
Chicago	6	14	3	15	48	82	
NORTHWEST DIVISION						Edmonton Oilers	
	W	L	T	Pts	GP	GA	
Edmonton	12	9	1	27	72	64	
Colorado	9	11	2	20	57	64	
Vancouver	9	11	2	20	57	64	
Calgary	8	13	2	18	63	70	
PACIFIC DIVISION						Phoenix Coyotes	
	W	L	T	Pts	GP	GA	
Phoenix	14	3	2	30	56	30	
Dallas	12	4	3	29	56	30	
Anaheim	8	10	5	21	54	57	
Los Angeles	6	15	1	13	45	55	
San Jose	5	12	5	15	49	59	
WEDNESDAY RESULTS						Dallas Stars	
Florida	0	1	0	1			
Buffalo	0	2	0	2			
1st Period: None. 2d Period: B-Premiere 2 (Zhitnik, Sharmov) 2. F-Whitney 7 (Miller, Murphy) 3. B-Ward 10 (Peca) 2d Period: None. Shots on goal: F-7-13-8-28. B-4-13-11-28. Goals: F-McLennan, B-Hosok.							
Maple Leaf	0	1	0	1			
Carolina	0	2	0	2			
1st Period: None. 2d Period: Carolina, Emerson 6 (Bortolotto, Gelsola) 2. M-Rivet 2 (Weinick, Haggard) 3. Carolina, Sheppard 11 (Weinick, Emerson) (opt.). 3d Period: Carolina, Primeau 12 (Koponen, Hill) 5. Carolina, O'Neil 6. Shots on goal: M-3-4-11-25. Carolina 10-4-4-22. Goals: M-Hackett, Carolina, Kidd.							
Los Angeles	0	1	0	1			
Toronto	0	1	0	1			
1st Period: None. 2d Period: 1-Darwin 4 (Sundin, Kariyev) (opt.). 3d Period: L.A.							

BASEBALL

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

TEXAS—Designated INF Domingo Cordero for assignment.
NATIONAL LEAGUE
CHICAGO—Agreed to terms with OF Henry Rodriguez on 2-year contract.
CHICAGO—Acquired RHP Manuel Borja from Florida for C-Domingo Cordero. Sold contract of 1B-OF Roberto Perez to Yankees of Japanese Central League.
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TRANSITIONS

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WOMEN

TOP 25

No. 4 Notre Dame (4-0) def. Toledo, 82-64.
No. 14 Tech (6-0) def. San Jose State, 90-39.
No. 14 Duke (5-1) def. Florida St., 91-72.
No. 17 N. Carolina St. (3-3) lost to No. 25 Clemson (4-0), 88-67.
No. 28 Vanderbilt (3-0) lost to Oklahoma St., 67-64.

RUGBY UNION

WORLD CUP QUALIFYING

GROUP 1
Spain 21, Portugal 17
STADIUMS—Scotland 3 points Spain 3
Portugal 0.
Scotland and Spain qualified for 1999 F.M.

SOCCER

CHAMPIONS' LEAGUE

GROUP B
Galatasaray 1, Juventus 1
STADIUMS—Galatasaray 8 points
Rosenborg Trondheim 8, Juventus 5 Athletic Bilbao 3.

U.S. COLLEGE SOCCER

TOP 25

No. 4, Duke (4-1) def. No. 9 Michigan St., 4-0 73-67.
No. 17, N. Carolina (5-0) def. Ark.-Pine Bluff, 7-0 7-2.
No. 18, UCLA (7-0) def. Delaware St., 10-0 47.
No. 21, Utah (3-0) lost to Rhode Island, 70-51.
No. 22, Miami, Ohio (4-1) lost to No. 23 Xavier (5-2), 64-54.

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SPORTS

Suicide Squeeze in the Front Office

Some Baseball Teams Still Don't Understand the Free-Agent Era

By Thomas Boswell
Washington Post Service

WASHINGTON — In baseball, the suicide squeeze used to be called with a runner on third base. Now, the suicide squeeze occurs in winter as otherwise sane teams are squeezed into making lunatic bids for free agents.

All summer, teams spin a fantasy in their own minds: Their ballpark is the loudest. Their owner is the best to play for. Surely, the future belongs to them. Any sensible free agent will understand their virtues, be delighted to sign with them and, maybe, even agree to a cheap deal just for the privilege of playing in such a paradise.

Simultaneously, these very same teams look at their own players who are in the final years of their contracts. Every week, those fellows seem to sprout small horns. Previously unnoticed flaws in their play and subtle blemishes in character appear.

The notion gradually dawns on the owner and general manager that the reason the home team is not the world champion has nothing to do with their own bonehead blunders. Rather, the disappointments of recent seasons have their root in these disloyal, too-familiar faces who are threatening to leave if they aren't bribed to stay with enormous ransoms.

Finally, the season ends and reality begins to reintroduce itself. At the moment, prosperous teams such as the Orioles, Red Sox, Dodgers, Astros and Rockies wake up every morning ready to scream. "We're gonna get shut out!" Even teams that care little about competing have to save face with their fans or risk empty ballparks. The "major market" White Sox just lost Albert Belle and Robin Ventura. Don't they have to sign somebody? And do it fast?

What we're watching is musical chairs, played for multimillion-dollar stakes. And the music is about to stop. Team after team, after repeating the same mistakes we've watched for the last 20 years, now asks itself, "How did this happen to us? I thought we had a plan."

This annual suicide squeeze has become a more familiar recurring nightmare. Sometimes, one huge signing sets off a chain reaction. First, perhaps, Mike Piazza signs with the New York Mets for \$91 million for seven years. If you are the Dodgers you grasp that Piazza never really wanted to come back to Los Angeles. You're going to need a big bat at catcher, not Charles Johnson, who hit .218. If you're the poor Phils, you realize Piazza couldn't care less that he was raised in Philly. Pure fantasy. If you're the Orioles, it hits you like a ton of bricks that you've completely misjudged the marketplace. Salaries, based

on Piazza, are going to go through the roof. Your wait-em-out strategy stunk.

Next, when Jose Offerman signed with Boston for \$26 million, more jaws dropped. Piazza is a future Hall of Famer. But who is Offerman?

In this autumn of delusion, the Red Sox assumed they were building a team worthy of Bernie Williams. Naturally, the Yankees' center fielder would defect to play in Fenway Park. As New Englanders know, anybody sensitive enough to play jazz guitar like Williams would never voluntarily return to the Bronx when he could play near the Boston Common. Besides, Bernie had had tiffs with the Yanks.

Then, one horrid day, the Sox discovered Williams had re-signed with New York. How could Bernie, classy Bernie, do that? The Yanks had blitzed him with an \$87.5 million offer as soon as their contract talks with Belle broke down. Faster than you could say, "Mo Vaughn is an Angel," the Red Sox suddenly realized that they desperately needed Rafael Palmeiro.

But so did the Orioles. Because Brian Jordan had turned them down to go to Atlanta. And because Todd Stottlemyre chose to play in the Arizona desert instead of by the Chesapeake Bay.

Big league organizations never learn, do they? Their uniforms aren't prettier. Their money doesn't spend better.

Write these invaluable clichés on the front-office wall: Do not let familiarity breed contempt. (Otherwise, you'll end up nagging Roberto Alomar and Palmeiro about their attitudes, then get cornered into replacing them with Belle.) Love the one you're with (if you get the one you want). You can't always get what you want, but you just might find that you get what you need.

At the moment, the baseball landscape is littered with scattered delusions.

The Houston Astros thought that, once he got to know them, Randy John-

son would re-sign with them. After all, the Big Unit went 11-1 in Texas. Instead, the Big Unit went to the crazy-spending Diamondbacks boss, Jerry Colangelo, who seems determined to bring obscene NBA salaries to the merely preposterous major leagues.

San Diego still thinks Kevin Brown has fuzzy feelings about that Padres pennant he helped win and the new stadium that the town has agreed to build. The Padres think that's going to help 'em at closing time when some panic-stricken general manager, his job in jeopardy, cuts to the chase and says, "What will it take to sign you, Brown? Just name it."

The Orioles think B.J. Surhoff loves the Camden Yards fans and would never sign with Pittsburgh for a few million more. After everything that's happened, yes, they're still counting on B.J.'s soft heart, not his hard head. They're also convinced all they have to do to ink Delino DeShields, born in Delaware, is pick up the phone and whistle. What if somebody else phones first and says, "Delino, this is our top offer. We're blowing our budget for you. But we can't get in a bidding contest with Baltimore. No phone calls. Decide right now."

That's how it happens. Palmeiro said the final moments of his decision process were "like a poker game." He was within "two or three minutes" of re-signing with Baltimore. What swayed him in those last gut-check moments? Desire to return to his off-season home in Texas? The delight at evicting his old nemesis, Will Clark, from his job as Rangers first baseman? Animosity toward the we-don't-need-him treatment he got in Baltimore? All of the above?

Soon, the process of self-deception can start all over again. As next Thanksgiving rolls around, the squeeze will tighten again. Perhaps the only inflexible rule of the free agent era is this: Screw up early and avoid the rush.

Japanese Baseball Legend Could Face Ban

The Associated Press

TOKYO — Sadaharu Oh, the Japanese baseball great who hit a record 868 home runs, could face a lifetime ban if an investigation finds that the team that he manages orchestrated sign-stealing from television cameras.

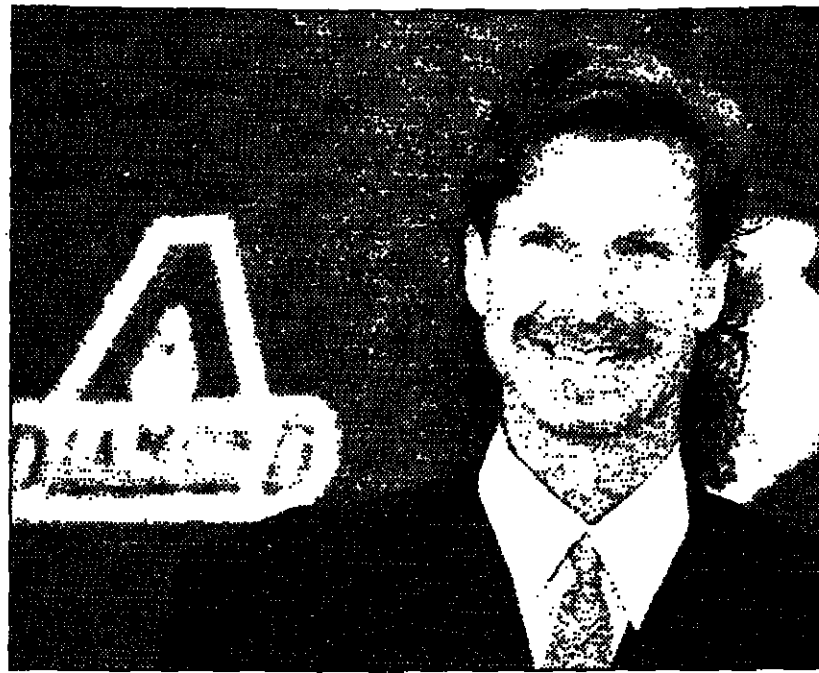
"I can't believe it," Oh said Thursday. "I'd like to believe my players."

Oh has not been directly implicated in the allegations against his Daiei Hawks, and the three players accused have denied wrongdoing.

The Pacific League does not specify penalties, but some news reports said that Oh could receive a lifetime ban if the inquiry found his team guilty.

According to the allegations, a team employee monitored TV cameras in Fukuoka Dome that showed the opposing catcher. The employee deciphered the catcher's signs and used a walkie-talkie to pass on the information to a youngster in the stands who had been hired for the job. Japanese news reports said. The youngster allegedly relayed information to batters by waving a megaphone.

The team management questioned the three players Thursday. Japanese news organizations said. The players, infielders Koichiro Yoshinaga and Shikato Yanagita and outfielder, Noriyoshi Omichi, denied the allegations.



MULTIMILLION DOLLAR SMILE — Randy Johnson, who signed with Diamondbacks for \$52.4 million, meeting the media in Phoenix.

Off-Season Diversion: See Free Agents Get Rich

Ventura Goes to Mets, Rodriguez to the Cubs

The Associated Press

The free agent market is remaining busy and buoyant.

On Wednesday, Robin Ventura, a third baseman, finalized a \$32 million, four-year contract with the New York Mets and Henry Rodriguez agreed to return to the Chicago Cubs for an \$8.9 million, two-year deal.

Even Carlos Hernandez struck it rich. After just one season as a starter, he said, he worked out a \$6.5 million, three-year contract to stay with the San Diego Padres.

Also Wednesday, Kevin Brown, the top free agent pitcher left, met with the St. Louis Cardinals.

Ventura, a five-time Gold Glove and potent left-handed bat, also talked to Baltimore after the Chicago White Sox decided not to meet his contract demands.

"They were looking for a left-handed hitting third baseman, and I kind of fit that," Ventura said of the Mets. "It boiled down to going to the place with the best chance of winning, and that's why I'm here."

Ventura, who made \$6.1 million this year, gets a \$1 million signing bonus with \$250,000 payable on July 1 of each of the next four years. He gets \$6.75 million next season, \$7.75 million in 2000 and \$8.25 million in each of the final two years. He has a limited no-trade clause.

The Mets have committed \$155 million this off-season to three players. They re-signed Mike Piazza to a \$91

million, seven-year deal and kept ace Al Leiter with a \$32 million, four-year contract.

In their search for a leadoff hitter, the Mets are talking to Rickey Henderson. Mets general manager Steve Phillips met with Henderson's agents for two hours Wednesday night at Shea Stadium.

Rodriguez, acquired by the Cubs from Montreal last December for pitcher Miguel Batista, hit .251 last season with 31 homers and 85 RBIs. After making \$2.7 million last season, he gets a \$200,000 signing bonus, \$3.6 million next year and \$4.5 million in 2000.

The Cubs also signed right-hander Scott Sanders, released by San Diego on Nov. 17. Sanders, 29, pitched in 23 games for the NL champions, going 3-1 with 26 strikeouts, five walks and a 4.11 ERA in 30 2-3 innings.

Hernandez hit .252 with nine homers and 52 RBIs this season and batted .325 in 14 postseason games for San Diego, including a team-high .417 in the first round win over Houston.

"The one thing we've had that's been a problem over the last couple of years is the ever-changing catcher when you're trying to develop pitchers," said Kevin Towers, the Padres general manager. "This should give us a little bit of continuity, which is important."

The Padres apparently will lose center fielder Steve Finley, who is close to signing with the Arizona Diamondbacks. Finley reportedly will get a four-year deal. He had been seeking \$6 million a year.

5 Cy Youngs Are Great, But Clemens Wants a Ring

By Murray Chass
New York Times Service

NEW YORK — When Roger Clemens was a free agent two years ago, he shunned two teams that had been and would continue to be legitimate contenders, the New York Yankees and the Cleveland Indians. Now, after winning his fourth and unprecedented fifth Cy Young awards but no championships with the Toronto Blue Jays, Clemens wants to be traded to a contender.

The pitcher made that request Wednesday through his agent, and the Blue Jays, adhering to a verbal commitment made two years ago, said they would comply. Gord Ash, the team's general manager, said he wanted to move as quickly as possible, in the next week to 10 days.

"I'd say I'm on a fast track with this," Ash said. "There are so many other things going on with free agents and other deals, we need to have this clarified before we move on."

After speaking with Clemens' agent, Randy Hendricks, Ash immediately contacted the Yankees, Cleveland, Texas and Houston. Those teams, he said, had shown the strongest interest dating to last July. He said he expected to talk to other teams as soon as the news spread.

Ash said the Yankees "were very interested in the trade deadline, so one could assume they still are."

"Who wouldn't have an interest in Clemens?" said Brian Cashman, the Yankees general manager.

Ash said the Indians, Rangers and Astros all said they were very interested and would be in touch with him.

"We'll be looking for players who could help us at the major league level now," Ash said. "Prospects aren't going to work."

"We're going to need at least some pitching back," he added. "But I want to be open minded about this. I don't want to predetermine what it will take. I want to see what the offers are."

Given that the Rangers, Astros and Indians all have been seeking pitching to bolster their staffs, the Yankees would seem to be in the best position to include a starting pitcher because they have six. But would the Blue Jays trade Clemens to a team in their division?

"We've debated that," Ash said. "I don't see that as a roadblock. What we have to concentrate on is getting the best possible deal. If that presents itself from within the division, that would be unusual, but you have to do what you have to do both short and long term."

DENNIS THE MENACE



"Now, don't be a stranger."

"On go ahead and be one."

"SIVOR"

"GULEN"

"GONNIG"

"NAUCIV"

"SIVOR"

"GULEN"

"GONNIG"

"NAUCIV"

"SIVOR"

"GULEN"

"GONNIG"

"NAUCIV"

"SIVOR"

"GULEN"

"GONNIG"

"NAUCIV"

PEANUTS



"I WAS WONDERING IF I COULD BORROW YOUR SLED DOG."

"I DON'T HAVE A SLED DOG."

"WHAT ABOUT HIM? HE COULD PULL A SLED, COULDN'T HE?"

"I DON'T THINK SO."

"HE TIRES EASILY."

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

GARFIELD



"Dear Santa, I am writing this for my cat."

"He would like you to bring him ten thousand pizzas."

"ANYTHING ELSE?"

"AND AN ANTACID TABLET."

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

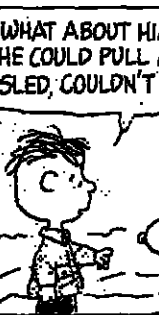
"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

BEETLE BAILEY



"STUPID IDIOT!"

"FAT JERK!"

"DICTATOR!!"

"BOOM!!"

"BAM!"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

"HUH?"

BLONDIE



"LIFE MUST'VE BEEN SO DIFFICULT."

"NO KITCHENS! NO SANDWICHES! NO ROCK CONCERTS! NO MASCARA!"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

CALVIN AND HOBBS



"Off the swing, Twinky."

"FORGET IT, MOE. I JUST GOT ON. YOU HAVE TO WAIT YOUR TURN LIKE EVERYONE ELSE."

"I said, 'OFF.'"

"I KEEP FORGETTING THAT RULES ARE ONLY FOR LITTLE NICE PEOPLE."

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

WIZARD OF ID



"THERE GOES SON OF PIED PIPER!"

"WHAT DOES HE DO?"

"RIPS THE CASTLE OF POLKA DANCERS."

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

NON SEQUITUR



"PLEASE SHOW A WIFE BEFORE SITTING ON LAP."

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

"Z"

DOONESBURY



